THE OXONIAN

IN

NORWAY;

OR,

NOTES OF EXCURSIONS

IN THAT COUNTRY IN 1854–1855.

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES

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PREFACE.

THE writer of the following pages, during his excursions in Norway, jotted down at the time notes of what he saw and heard and thought. This was done by him more for his own amusement, and to gratify the curiosity of friends at home, who were anxious to know something about the incidents of his travels, than with any definite purpose on his part of venturing into print. Intended for private use, these pages would, probably, never have seen the light, had they not chanced to fall into the hands of a literary friend, who advised their publication, not so much, perhaps, for any intrinsic merit they possess, as on account of

the great interest that English readers have taken, of late, in descriptions of Norway.

It will, at once, be understood, that the author does not profess to give any digested or systematic account of the country and its people, their institutions and manners. Profound disquisitions, and logical trains of argument were quite beside his purpose. As he journeyed along, fishing-rod in hand, or gun on shoulder, now chatting with the people, now plucking flowers in the woods, now musing over the wonderful and wild scenery—the thoughts and incidents of the moment were set down in the order that they occurred: the starch of conventionalism being entirely forgotten.

Plenty of books have already appeared about Norway. Its agricultural, political, and social aspects have been ably discussed by that matter-of-fact writer, Laing. Its physical geography has found an agreeable exponent in the accomplished Professor Forbes. Some works have been devoted to its scenery, others almost exclusively to its salmon fishing. Still

the subject is very far from being exhausted. And it will be found that, while the author has abstained as much as possible from referring to matters mentioned by other writers, several incidents, illustrative of the manners and customs of the country, have occurred to him, which no other traveller has recorded. Indeed, many of the scenes here described lay in remote parts of the country, which had never been visited by Englishmen, and where the sight of one was quite a phenomenon.

Under these circumstances, he trusts that he may be excused for appearing before the public; and he ventures to hope that these notes, which have, in some parts, been revised and extended for publication, may not be altogether devoid of interest. The country described is attractive to an Englishman, principally, from the unfettered liberty he there enjoys of roaming at will over its vast expanse, whatever be his pursuit. While the rest of the Continent is being fenced and enclosed; while in England, in particular, it is becoming next to impossible to get off the dusty high road on

to the tufted common as of yore—alas! for Cowley, and Shotover, and the fast disappearing commons round Oxford,—three-fourths of Scandinavia is as wild and open as ever:—Connemara, in short, on a much vaster scale. But Norway is not only interesting for its unique scenery, but also for its blood-relationship with Great Britain—a point which has been well brought out by the Danish writer, Wors-aae.

It is interesting, too, on account of its recent narrow escape from falling into Russian hands —an event which, had it been consummated, would have been prejudicial to British interests.

Lastly, it is a country deserving of much attention, from the rapid strides that it has made since it obtained a constitution, in commerce and civilization: in spite of its scanty population, barren soil and lengthened winters:—an example fraught with instruction to its neighbours, as showing, in a striking manner, the advantages that result from free institutions.

OXFORD, JULY, 1856.

CONTENTS

TO

THE FIRST VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

Oxford Gaieties and Oxford Dulness—Migratory Tendencies—An Important Query — What you will not find in Norway — Parisian Cockneyism and Piscatorial Heresies—The Delights of Norway—The Waterfalls — Incidents of the Voyage — The Jealousy of "Old Norwegians" — Ill-feeling between the Danes and the Norsemen—Russian Vessels under the Battery of Oddero — Christiansand — The best Drink in Norway — A Rustic Pastor — A Bishop smokes a Havannah — Beneficial Effects of Free Trade on the Norwegian Mercantile Marine . . . . . 1—14

CHAPTER II.

Christiania — The Royal Palace — The Museum of Natural History — Mr. Bennett — Off for Bergen—A Steep Road—Posting Arrangements in Norway — Midnight Twilight—The Sleeping Beauty—Ranzfiord . . . . . 15—24

CHAPTER III.

The Province of Hadeland—Post Stations and their Interiors—Wooden Churches—A Legend of Piety and Sisterly Affection —Another Version—The Night-jar—The Swimming Phenomenon — Our Post-boy — Beauty in Distress — The Aasen Mountain—A Ministering Angel—Her Father's Sunday Jacket —Story of a Bear—Introduction of the Art of Fly-Fishing—An Historical Disquisition—A Fly-Fishing Anecdote—The Lady of the Wood—Features of Norwegian Roads . . 25—38

CHAPTER IV.

The District of Valders—Lingering Legends of the Black Death —Story of the Wild Girl — Story of the Peasant — Bodily Appearance assumed by the Plague — Arrival at Oyloe—A satisfactory Breakfast — Mountain Peasantry returning from Church—Costumes of Norwegian Childhood—Tame Reindeer —Bergenstift—Characteristics of Norwegian Horses—Affection of the Norsemen for their Horses—Hatred and Fear of the Czar in Norway . . . . . 39—54

CHAPTER V.

Norway singularly bare of Ancient Historical Remains—Antique Wooden Churches—Churches used as Museums in Norway—Laing's Assertion respecting the paucity of Small Birds in

Norway disproved — Dinner at Leirdalsoren — The German Traveller's Disappointment—The Glacier of Justedal—A Boat-Voyage to Gudvangen . . . . . 55—64

CHAPTER VI.

The Grandest Scenery in Norway—The Keelfoss behind Gudvangen—Horses for Kongsberg Fair—A Female Postboy—A Phenomenon explained — The Church at Vossevangen—The last Popish Bishop of Bergen—Bolstadören—Hot Weather—Frequency of Conflagrations—An ill-omened Name—English Quakers—Origin of Quakerism in Norway—The Laws of the Conscription—A curious Burial Custom—A Quaker objects to it—The Majestic Hornelin—A Vision of Sir Walter Scott—Stadland—Patience of the Norwegian Character . 65—84

CHAPTER VII.

Method of ascertaining whether the Herrings are off the Coast—The Herring Fishery at Stavanger—Söndmör and Nördmör—Influence of the Fisheries on the Persons engaged in them—Aalesund—A Nice Perfume—A Norsk Beauty—The Omen—A Love-Song . . . . . 85—95

CHAPTER VIII.

Fanne Fjord—Fishing Quarters at Feva—Salmon Fishing during an Eclipse—Lange Fjord—A Long Chase—Pastor B.—Rough Music at a Pic-nic—Eagle and Salmon—The Sea-Serpent—A Phenomenon explained . . . . . 96—106

CHAPTER IX.

Old Shörter with his Cap on—A Bridal Party—Interchange of Compliments—English Travellers spoil the Natives—Pursuit of the Reindeer — A Disappointment — A Desolate Spot—The Lady of the Lake—Story of a Stolen Bride—A Weird District—A Midnight Encampment — Ornithological Experiences — Stordal—A Glimpse of Reindeer—Disadvantages of wearing a Glazed Hat—A mysterious Midnight Disturbance—A Reindeer Shooter's Costume—A singular Spot—A Hunter's Refuge—An unexpected Meeting—Peculiar Formation of the Reindeer's Hoof—Timid Women — The Reindeer at home and in the Regent's Park—Norway not a show place—A Dangerous Ferry—Arrival at Sundalsören—Eridsfjord . . . 107—136

CHAPTER X.

The Harbour at Christiansund — Desolate Character of the surrounding Country—The Valley of Sundal—Its Morality—Sickness in the Change-House at Jüra—Medical Destitution of the Mountaineers—Cure for an Adder's Bite—An Accident which happened to the Author at Ostersund—Robbery of a Golden Eagle's Nest—Desperate Leap taken by a Wolf—Embarrassing Politeness—Avalanches and their Effects 137—150

CHAPTER XI.

Hoas a good Fishing Station — Amazement of the Natives at first witnessing Fly-Fishing—The English Nobleman—Ole, a picturesque Norwegian—Family Wardrobes—Characteristics of Scandinavian Pigs—Pursuit of a Bear—A Fieldfare's Defence of its Nest—Successful Trout-Fishing—Pastor G.'s Chalet—A Rough but Good Supper—Infamous way in which the Norwegian Peasants destroy the Black Cock . . . 151—162

CHAPTER XII.

Pastor G.'s Hospitality—His Literary Tastes—A Clever Smith—A Norwegian Clergyman's Work — A Famous Trout Lake—Fight between Two Wolves and a Newfoundland Dog — Methods practised in Norway for Catching and Destroying Wolves — Stories about Bears — The Morals of the People improved by the removal of Incentives to Drink—Mr. Laing's Accounts considered — Difficulty of obtaining Brandy — An exhilarated Clergyman—His Anathema on Puseyites—The Rite of Confirmation in Norway—Tiedemann's Picture of a Catechising in the Church of Hitterdal — A Confirmation in Sundalsören Church—Wood Ptarmigan Shooting — Stangvig Fjord—An unsuccessful Fishing Excursion—Characteristics of Norwegian Salmon—Salmon in the Rivers flowing into the Gulf of Bothnia . . . . . 163—182

CHAPTER XIII.

On board the Ship 'Aeger'—A Norwegian Belle—Teeth of the Sundalen Damsels—A paltry Enactment—Aspect of Trondjem — The Museum of Natural History — The Cathedral — The Miracle-working Well of St. Olaf—A melancholy Portrait of a Facetious Bishop — Origin of the Cathedral of Trondjem — Salmon-Fishing at the Falls of the Nid — Cheap Lodgings — Sunday Entertainments — A narrow Escape from the "Steenbit"—Low State of the Science of Natural History in Norway . . . . . 183—197

CHAPTER XIV.

The Commerce of Trondjem — Reputed Exclusiveness of its Merchants — Trondjem and Bergen compared — Deficient Wharfage at Trondjem—Decline of its Trade with Sweden by way of Levanger—System of Smuggling formerly pursued by its Merchants — The Trondjem Iron Foundry — Instance of Russian Venality . . . . . 198—205

CHAPTER XV.

Departure from Trondjem—Unfortunate Flowers—The Vessel's Freight—The Pastor of the Namsen District — The Parish

Priest at Carlsö—Isolated State of the Norwegian Clergy—Characteristics of the Peasantry — Instances of Norwegian Superstition—Coast Scenery—The natural Tunnel through the Rock of Torhätten—The Island of Tjotö—The Range of the Seven Sisters—A Huntsman's first experience as Piscator—The Four-peaked Threnen — The Bird Island and Lord Brougham's Portrait—An Oxonian's Adventure with a Bear—English Sportsmen in Norway — Commercial Travellers —A Party of Swedish Students—Fraternization of the Students of Upsala, Copenhagen, Christiania—A novel kind of Salmon-trap—The Artificial Breeding of Salmon . . 206—229

CHAPTER XVI.

Bodö—The Consequences of Sacrilege—Snipe-Shooting—Eider Down—A dangerous Current at the junction of the Salten and Skjerstad Fjords—Old Woman's Island—Mysterious Disappearance of a Bear—Sweetness wasted on the Desert Air—A Momentous Query—The Famous Maelstrom—The Northern Cod Fishery—Laws respecting the preparation of the Stock Fish—Perils to which the Fishermen are exposed—A Catastrophe—Cod-Liver Oil—Tolls and Tithes paid by the Fisheries —Gullibility of the Cod-fish . . . . 230—249

CHAPTER XVII.

The Luffodens—Waagekalle—Jotul—A Distant View—Better Days—Domestic Affairs of Eider Ducks—An Osprey in Trouble —Swartsund—Homes in the Wilderness—Soltie—Polar Ice—The Climate of Norway—Russian Filibusters . 250—266

CHAPTER XVII.

A Boat Voyage from Kloven—The Andswand—A Wedding Guest —An Untimely Marriage—Midnight Visit to a Cabin—Twofold Efficacy of Medicine—Arrival at Fosmoen—Characteristics of the neighbouring Country—The Bardu and the Malanger—Magnificent Mountain Scenery—Autumn Sunsets—Ascent of the Iis-Tind—Fosmoen—A Marriage Party—The culminating Point—A Gigantic Feast—The Bride and the Bridesmaids—A New Country—The Hostess in Gala Dress—Bridal Gifts—The Ascetic Priest—"Ugudelig"—The Nectar of the Scandinavian Valhalla—A Finmark Soyer—His Heroic Adventure with a Bear—A group of old Stories . . . . 267—290

CHAPTER XVIII.

Grand Fishing Quarters—A fierce Salmon Pool—Dangers and Difficulties—"Staking"—An unexpected Plunge—An unkempt Carl—The first Salmon—Mistaken Zeal—An Exciting Moment —A Prize . . . . . 291—300

THE

OXONIAN IN NORWAY.

CHAPTER I.

Oxford Gaieties and Oxford Dulness — Migratory tendencies—An important Query—What you will not find in Norway—Parisian Cockneyism and Piscatorial Heresies—The Delights of Norway—The Waterfalls—Incidents of the Voyage — The Jealousy of "Old Norwegians"—Ill-feeling between the Danes and the Norsemen — Russian Vessels under the Battery of Oddero—Christiansand—The best Drink in Norway—A Rustic Pastor—A Bishop smokes a Havannah—Beneficial Effects of Free Trade on the Norwegian Mercantile Marine.

OXFORD Commemoration had come and gone. The eloquent Chancellor had laid the first stone of the new Museum, and expatiated before a crowd of eager listeners—enchanted with the fluent oratory and noble

bearing of my Lord of Derby—on the advantages which would accrue from the new Institution to Physical Science in general, and Oxford in particular. The Right Honourable W. E. Gladstone had, also, appeared on the scene, anxious, doubtless, to keep his wavering supporters steady in their allegiance. But his peculiar theories on "the paramount destinies of Russia" will not so soon be forgotten. The ladies fair, who on these occasions invade the precincts of the monasteries, startling the grave Dons from their propriety, or rather thawing and animating the cold and lifeless monachism of the place, had all disappeared like a dream; not a few having inflicted wounds which only matrimony will scar over.

The Colleges were empty. Undergraduates off upon reading parties. The Seniors to Scotland or the continent. Quite right too! There is nothing like escaping for a time from the circle of dull regularities, in which our insular life rejoices to move.

There is a great deal of truth in that quaint Chinese proverb, "the dog in the kennel barks at his fleas, but the dog who is hunting does not feel them." Which being interpreted, is "everlasting stopping at home makes the heart eat itself away, like a moth fretting a garment." This is emphatically true of Oxford life during the Long, when half the shops in the High Street are closed; and the place, so lately all life and commotion, subsides into the dulness of a 'deserted village.' So off we go.

Where shall it be to? The Rhine, or Switzerland, or the Tyrol? All excellent in their way, but so overrun with Britons, that ever and anon you fancy yourself at home again. As for myself, my old haunts in Scandinavia still possess irresistible attractions. A friend of mine, after travelling the length and breadth of central Europe, took it into his head one summer to explore Norway. This is five years ago. Since then, every summer has found him in the same place.

A fact which speaks volumes for the amusement to be found in that country.

If you must sleep in a good hotel, and sit down to table-d'hôte every day, then avoid Norway. In the whole country, which has a coast some two thousand miles long, there are not half-a-dozen hotels out of the modern capital, Christiania. I once heard, by the bye, a sedate 'Head of a House' inquire whether the hotels in Lapland were comfortable. Alas! for his simplicity. In Scandinavia the beds are too short—the sheets are often soiled, and so brief, that you will find your limbs not unfrequently in disagreeable proximity to an undressed coverlet of calf or reindeer skin. And then the fleas! By all means provide yourself with a little of the Armenian specific against these animals mentioned by Curzon; Brown, Jones and Robinson will assuredly be out of place there. Those Frenchmen one has seen at Chamouni, with 'jockey caps' *glacé* gloves, and patent leather boots, had better keep away. Apropos, I once saw

one of these gentry in the Pyrenees, a true Parisian cockney, who proposed catching small trout with *maggots*, and the larger ones with *fromage*.

But if you are a lover of wild and savage nature, whether as sketcher, botanist, geologist, or sportsman, especially the last, then go by all means. You will have a regular shooting coat life of it; no conventional bother, no fuss about external appearances, and you will meet with much that goes to the heart of an adventurous Englishman. Of course, you will have to rough it, to live on the simplest fare; but you will soon rise superior to all those petty drawbacks. Think of catching big trouts and char, bigger than ever you saw in England, and nothing to pay for the sport. No subscription ticket to be purchased, no water-bailiff at your heels, or competing anglers to disturb the holes you are coming to. Think too of the intense pleasure of an exciting contest with a salmon in the tearing rapids of a

Norwegian Elv—old fox-hunters tell me that they prefer it to the "hounds in full cry."

Then again the waterfalls! waterfalls that really deserve the name—not your Staubachs; which, after toiling for miles to see, you find not worth the journey. Or, would you like to try your hand at the noble capercailzie, the black-cock, the mountain and wood-ptarmigan, not to mention your chance of bringing down a reindeer, or a bear, or wolf; and nobody to say you nay. Or, mayhap, you would like, just for the fun of the thing, to light your cigar with a burning glass at midnight.

> "Ye who love the haunts of nature,
> Love the shadow of the forest,
> Love the wind among the branches,
> And the rushing of great rivers
> Through the palisades of pine-trees,
> And the thunder of the mountains,
> Whose innumerable echoes
> Flap like eagles in the eyries."

To such people I am speaking. Remember too, that this is the country of men whose

blood flows in your veins, to whom, perhaps, we owe the best and most adventurous part of our character; the Viking spirit, which makes us masters of the sea, and which we should utterly have wanted, had Saxon slowness received no infusion of Scandinavian daring. Besides which, last not least, you will have no trouble about passports. No insulting Austrian official will step in and turn you back, if your papers are not *en règle*. And so you had better do as I did, put yourself on board the good ship 'Courier,' Captain Daniel Fairburn, Commander—as worthy a fellow and skilful a seaman as ever crossed the North Sea— and start from Hull on the evening of any Friday in the summer.

Tying some fresh salmon flies, and chatting with the passengers served to beguile the tedium of the voyage. One of them was a stalwart Presbyterian parson, who, I take it, knew as much about catching a salmon as most folks, and who has figured in more than one of Landseer's Highland scenes. He taught me

a wrinkle or two in the constructing of flies, which I did not neglect to "take a note of."

We had also the usual sprinkling of "old Norwegians" on board, *i. e.* English *habitués* of Norway, men bound for the Namsen, where they held a lease of the different sections of water. It is amusing to see how jealous these good folks are of all strange faces. New-comers, such as some Oxford Undergraduates who were on board, find little favour in their eyes. The operation of getting butter out of a hungry dog's throat is as nothing to the difficulty of extracting a crumb of information from them about possible sporting quarters. In fact, things have not changed for the better since the days of Belton and Sir Hyde Parker, and the earlier visitors of this country. Rich yachting Englishmen are fast raising the prices, and making the people less civil, and more exacting by over pay and aristocratic airs. Most of the best rivers have, consequently, been let on lease for years to come. But still, as may

easily be imagined with such an immense range of coast, there are many streams unlet, where salmon abound, and which would afford first-rate sport.

Among the passengers was a Dane, who did not at all relish being taken for a Norwegian.

"They are very dirty," he said, "Faugh! and so conceited, if they have a little money." His admiration "against" the English ladies was very great.

"Your dog, sir," he continued, pointing to my old pointer, "will hunt the bear and the fox, I suppose?"

There is no love lost between the Danes and Norwegians. The recollection of Danish misrule still rankles in the bosom of the Norskmen. In their very language, which is identical with Danish, they effect a harshness in contradistinction to the smoother dialect of Denmark.

"We cannot bear the Danes," said a young Norwegian on board to me. "They oppressed

us so long. They took our men to watch their coasts, and the produce of our silver mines to enrich and beautify Copenhagen."

By way of illustration to this jealous feeling between the two nations, I may mention, that the blowing up of Christian VIII. by Schleswig-Holsteiners during the last war, is a common picture in Norwegian farm-houses. One of those straws, perhaps, which serve to indicate which way the wind blows. On the other hand, there is an equally jealous feeling in Norway against the Swedes; who are continually talking of Norway, as if she were a conquered nation; whereas, in fact, it is a constitutional kingdom federally united with Sweden under one sovereign.

On the Monday we were off Oxö light-house, and soon within the snug and excellent harbour of Christiansand. Three Russian vessels, a brig and two barks lay under the battery of Odderö. They had managed to escape our cruisers by coming round Scotland at the beginning of the war; and took refuge

in this neutral port. An attempt was made by the owners to sell them by auction, but they were out in their reckoning; the French consul interfered, and said that they would be taken as lawful prizes if they left the harbour. So there they are rotting away and deserted by their crews.

The town is picturesquely situated; but I have nothing more to record of it, except that its neat streets which are all built at right angles, were blazing hot, and we were not sorry to get some Bayersk öl at Mr. Rosenkilde, merchant and public entertainer, price about five skillings a bottle, or about twopence-halfpenny of our money. This beverage, which is a very good imitation of Bavarian beer, is by no means to be despised. To my mind, it is the best drink in Norway.

On returning to the pier, we observed some convicts guarded by a soldier, at work. After discharging part of our cargo, such as cotton bales, galvanized wire for the new coast telegraph, and iron goods, we were again on

our road. The delay had been, by the bye, rendered still longer by the absurd regulation of the place, which forbids a vessel to discharge and load at the same time. When will these Norwegians learn the value of time?

An addition had been here made to our company in the shape of a Pastor B. from the neighbourhood, who was bound to Italy, for three months, with his daughter. He was a man of rustic aspect, and his dress (pardon him ye Mediævalists) did not consist of an M. B. waistcoat and a collarless tunic. On the contrary, this apostolic man luxuriated in a grey cap, checked trousers, and green coat, and the pipe wherewith he occasionally solaced himself, was at least one yard long. In fact, the Norsk clergy do not study externals.

A piscatorial friend of mine, once meeting the present Bishop of Trondjem at a Scandinavian vicarage, had the pleasure of offering him a Havannah, the excellence of which he was not slow to test. Pastor B.'s

living is worth 800 dollars a-year in money, and his glebe he reckons at 300 more. On it live seven huusmaend, who each possess a small slice of land, enough to keep a cow or two, and are bound, in consequence, to work for the priest so many days in the year, at small wages. They are like the cottar tenants of Scotland. The priest lamented that the clergy have so much land, as the cultivation of it frequently interfered with their spiritual duties, and it is next to impossible to get a tenant for it.

From a Norsk skipper on board, who had just returned from a voyage to Alexandria with a cargo of English coals, I learnt that free trade has done wonders for the Norwegian mercantile marine. Shipbuilding has become quite the rage; the seaman's wages have doubled in consequence; while the price of provisions, especially near the coast, has correspondingly increased. It is a striking fact, however, shewing the

facilities in England for good and cheap ship-building, that with all their superfluity of the raw material, timber, and the cheapness of labour, the Norwegians have been beaten out of the market by the English. Instead of ships having been built in Norway on English account, the recent returns prove that the contrary has been the case.

CHAPTER II.

Christiania—The Royal Palace—The Museum of Natural History—Mr. Bennett—Off for Bergen—A Steep Road—Posting Arrangements in Norway—Midnight Twilight—The Sleeping Beauty—Ranzfiord.

On our arrival at Christiania, we found the city in a great bustle, the king and crown-prince being expected on a visit. Workmen were employed day and night in repaving some of the streets. A great gain this, for the pavement in some parts is truly execrable. What, at the average progress of Norsk workmen would have required six weeks to accomplish, will, I hear, thanks to the royal visit, be completed in a week. The aspect of Christiania, as

you approach it on the Fiord, is very beautiful.

In the bay was an American emigrant ship. But where the surplus population is to be found in this generally thinly peopled country, for the purposes of emigration, is not quite so clear. The city itself loses on a nearer inspection. The open drains are peculiarly repulsive, especially in summer. The Schloss, or royal palace, though it has an imposing look, standing as it does on the distant rising ground beyond the city, is, architecturally speaking, an abortion. The object most worth seeing, is the Museum of Natural History, in the University buildings; which I saw on my return.

Impatient to be off, we were soon in attendance on Mr. Bennett, and found him beset as usual by a bevy of our countrymen, who had come by the same steamer as ourselves. As is well known, there are no public coaches in Norway. Travelling is

effected in a small gig, called cariole, which strangers have to buy or hire. Formerly these could not always be procured at a moment's notice. Mr. Bennett, who, I understand, was once an Oxford Undergraduate, and is now resident in Christiania, discharging the various functions of assistant at the Consulship, clerk at the British chapel, and general agent, was the *deus ex machinâ* who appeared to supply the deficiency. What would the Britons do without him? Do you want a cariole and harness, and leather cases for your brandy, or brandy itself, or dog sacks, or what not, Mr. Bennett is your man. Hey presto! and off you start, all fully equipped, you engaging to pay him one third of the whole value of the vehicle on your return, at the end of three months.

Report says that the concern does not pay the spirited proprietor, as the vehicles earn nothing the other nine months, and are eating their heads off, as John Ostler

would say, in coach-house rent. But that is no business of ours.

So here we start off for Bergen. Scenery along this route very beautiful. Twenty miles journey on the road brings us to the height of Krogkleven, so famed for the sublime view it commands of Ringerike, with the beautiful Tyri and Hols Fjords in the foreground, while seventy miles off, in the western horizon, may be discerned the snow-clad range of the Gousta-field. Travellers compare this view to the scene from the Jura, looking towards the Lake of Geneva.

The descent here, through the narrow chasm in the sandstone, rendered dark by overhanging foliage, is a sample of what you have to expect in a journey through Norway.

"You'll get out, of course," exclaimed my companion, who was a novice in these matters. "It is quite impossible to drive down such a precipice as this." To say the truth, my cariole was heavily laden. Myself thirteen

stone, and the box behind a hundred weight, and then the bag of biscuits, and the bag of shot, and the gun, and the brandy bottles, &c. But that punchy little fellow, with his short legs, high shoulders, and round barrel, and intelligent eye—just like a christian's !—its all right. And so down we went. See how he gathers himself together to prevent the vehicle pushing him too hard at first; but now we are half way down; off he goes at an astounding trot; and in another minute or two we are safely at the bottom: in spite of the loose stones, and the ruts, and the water-courses, that often obstruct a steep hill in Norway.

Some of these hills are as a house side in steepness; so that at first, the traveller, when descending them at full speed, experiences that peculiar sensation in the stomach, which we have felt when going down into the trough of a long rolling sea in an open boat. But stomach and nerves soon get right, and the rapid pace becomes quite delightful.

We were in no hurry; so we had not sent on a messenger, or a forbud, as it is called, to order relays. But at most of these stations, as at Sundvolden, we easily procured the post-master's own horses by paying a few skillings extra. The posting department, by the bye, is excellently managed in Norway. In each post-house is kept a book, with the names of the peasants, who are bound to furnish horses; and the order in which they must do it. Supposing, therefore, that you have not gone to the expense of sending a messenger beforehand to order relays, you ought immediately you arrive at a station, to ask for the book, see whose turn it is to furnish horses, and the distance he lives off. Then take out your watch, and if the horses do not appear within a certain time, which is fixed by law according to distance of residence, the peasant is liable to a fine. Shew that you are wide awake, and no "tricks upon travellers," such as vexatious delays, will be passed upon you.

On the principal post-routes of Norway, there are now what are called Fast stations, where horses are procurable within ten minutes of your arrival. For this expedition you pay one half more; the whole expense being at the rate of about $2\frac{1}{4}d$ per English mile, which is just three farthings less per mile than the price which used to be paid in England for a horse and guide in the year of grace 1658. Norsk miles are equal to seven English; it is well they are, or, as Paddy would reason, you would never get over the ground. A pedestrian tour is out of the question, unless you are equipped with seven league boots; for the objects of attraction lie so far apart that all the time would be spent in getting from one place to another.

We now passed through a fertile region tolerably level for this country—where it is said, it is next to impossible to get a level piece of ground large enough to exercise a regiment of soldiers upon. A reedy concert of multitudinous land-rails, with the cry

of the gowk (cuckoo) and the song of the thrush, seemed to remind me of England. Laing is wrong in saying that there are no sparrows in this country; they are to be found as far north as Trondjem.

It was now growing somewhat dusk, twelve o'clock P.M. We shall not get into the region of broad, staring, bright daylight all the twenty-four hours, till we are a good deal north of this.

Arriving at a cross road, I did not know which way to take, as I was considerably ahead of my companion, and our dreng, or post-boy, who had to take back the horses was perched at the back of his cariole. In this dilemma, to my relief, I discerned a comfortable-looking farm-house, a little removed from the road. Into this I walked, the door not being fastened, and found a buxom damsel asleep in bed in the principal apartment. My old dog began scraping acquaintance with her after his fashion, by licking her hand, which awoke her with a start.

But she was not the least taken aback at finding a stranger thus disturbing her dreams. Indicating the route, she turned over with true Norwegian phlegm; when I thanked her and departed with apologies for the intrusion.

Good carioles are constructed in this part of the country. Two or three new ones met me on their road to Christiania for sale, the price being about £6 sterling. In Laing's time, twenty years ago, they might be procured for half that money. The shafts of those made at the metropolis are frequently of beech-wood, while these are of ash, and much more durable and springy. Magnificent fields of rye bordered the road. Barley and oats were also to be seen, but no wheat; indeed, I never saw a field of that grain in the whole of Norway, though a little is grown in places.*

* About 14,000 tönder was all the wheat that was produced in Norway in 1845. A tönde = ⅛ imperial quarter.

After sleeping at Klœkken, where the daughters of mine host actually played the piano, and where the charges were proportionably dearer, we soon joined the beautiful Ranzfjord, fifty miles long, on which a steamer plies every other day. Vast quantities of timber lay on the bottom of the lake ready to be launched down the river, over the Honen Foss, and so through the Tyri Fjord to Drammen. There is a direct water course from here to the sea, but the falls below prevent the salmon from getting up. However, immense trout, which are taken in the autumn, in some measure supply their deficiency.

CHAPTER III.

The Province of Hadeland — Post Stations and their Interiors—Wooden Churches—A Legend of Piety and Sisterly Affection—Another Version—The Night-jar—The Swimming Phenomenon—Our Post-boy—Beauty in Distress—The Aasen Mountain—A Ministering Angel—Her Father's Sunday Jacket—Story of a Bear—Introduction of the Art of Fly-Fishing—An Historical Disquisition—A Fly-Fishing Anecdote—The Lady of the Wood—Features of Norwegian Roads.

THE province of Hadeland into which we now enter is one of the most fertile in Norway; though perhaps hardly equal to the southern parts of Ringerike. By the bye, a Frenchman, whom I met at Christiania, spoke to me in raptures of the scenery of Rigerinke (sic) which reminded him, he said, of that of "Cock-Leven" in Scotland. I wonder

whether this was the man who explained Ausbruch to be a village in Hungary, from which the best Tokay was procured.

The stations along this road are far better than those on the old road from Christiania to the Miosen Lake, which is now happily superseded by the railway—the only one in Norway. The houses are roofed with red tiles, which look much more cheerful than the usual covering of earth. They are built of pine logs dove-tailed at the corners, and the crevices filled up with moss. Now and then the interior walls are lined with thin boarding. But in most houses, the naked logs, with the moss between them appear. The decorations consist chiefly of German Scripture prints, in beech wood frames. At one station there were portraits of Sir E. Codrington, the conqueror of Navarino, the Duke of Reichstadt, and a Norwegian Stadtholder; while Prussian army illustrations seemed all to be in high favour.

The churches in this country are almost always built of wood, but at Gran there are two of stone, standing close together. One of them is roofless, though its massive walls are in good preservation.

There are various legends to explain this twin phenomenon. According to one, they were built by two sisters, who were on such bad terms, that they could not agree to worship God in the same sanctuary; so in proof of their piety, they each built a church.

This tale is most likely to be explained of the time of the introduction of Christianity into the country, when the new religion and Paganism were in antagonism, and each had its votaries. At the same time, Norwegian sisters seem to have had a special taste for church-building. Hibbert, in his description of Shetland, mentions no less than three churches in those islands, which are said to have been built by three Norwegian sisters. An old Telemark legend

ascribes a more poetic origin to these churches.

A long time ago, there was service, one Sunday, in the old wooden church of Gran. It chanced that two sisters were tending their flocks close by, and singing at their work; and so sweetly did they sing, that the priest became confused, and broke down in his sermon. As a punishment, both sisters were transformed into the stone churches which now stand at Gran.

The night-jar seems prevalent hereabout. Night-drum is their Norsk appellation. I saw three pairs near Gran, although Bewick says, "two of them are seldom found together." They seemed very tame, buzzing across the path with a noise like a peg-top, and then suddenly changing their note into what you might fancy was the cry of a monster cricket.

We encountered a real *rara avis* beyond Ougedal, in the shape of a peasant swimming in a mill-pool. Swimming is an art almost

unknown in this country; and as for washing, that is entirely at a discount. Some of them ought to be sent to Broek, to get an idea of the advantages of soap and water occasionally. We could not resist the temptation, on this occasion, of stopping to commend the fellow's cleanliness. He was clearly in advance of his age; and his exploit was causing no little wonder to some gaping bystanders.

We continue to obtain magnificent views of the Ranzfjord. At one station, it being the priest's turn to schuss, *i. e.*, to forward travellers, his son acted as post-boy. He was a lad of nineteen, dressed in a suit of black and white check, all made at home. One of his brothers was studying for the Church, but this youth's tastes were agricultural. His father's living was worth twelve hundred dollars yearly; and the mare I drove, eighty. So he affirmed, but this is about double the usual price. He was excessively careful of her.

"Skum ligge paa hesten," (sweat lies upon the horse), he exclaimed, jumping down from his perch behind me, as we began to ascend a steeper hill than ordinary; and no wonder that she did sweat, for the heat was fearful.

"Puste hesten" (breathe the horse), was his next exclamation, although the pace was indifferent; and so he went on all the rest of the stage, varying the changes on "Puste hesten," "Skum ligge paa hesten," and "skrœkkelig hed" (terribly hot), &c., till I was fairly sick of his company.

The only thing he told me of interest, was that fifty-pound jacks were often caught in the lake, and that they committed great havoc among the small trout. He chewed tobacco strenuously. My interest in him was not increased when, at the end of the stage, he professed not to know accurately what distance he had come; but as I had invested a mark, tenpence sterling, in Christiania, on a little book of Norwegian roads, the gentleman took nothing by his motion.

On turning a sharp corner at the bottom of a hill we came on another travelling party, composed of an old officer in the Norwegian uniform, a blue coat with red facings, and a pretty young girl, who was evidently in some distress. In fact, the young lady's cariole had come to grief, the body of it being in one part of the road, and the shafts attached to the horse in another. The animal, it appeared, had shied—the most dangerous vice of these docile creatures; a smash had ensued, but the only damage done was to the vehicle. The old gentleman gave the girl an affectionate kiss of congratulation, apparently, on her escape from demolition. Subsequently, they repassed us on the road, all right, the girl in another cariole.

Leaving Brufladt, we passed over the Aasen mountain, upwards of four thousand feet high, which commands scenes never to be forgotten, of the Strandfjord, and the gigantic Hurungerne in the distance. In

due time, we arrive at Lillestrand on the banks of the lake. My companion being fairly knocked up with the heat, which had brought on an attack of the gout, we were fain to stop here twenty-four hours. The people were very obliging. Marit Niels-datter, aged seventeen, the daughter of our host, a girl with fair hair, blue eyes, and beautiful teeth, innocent of powder or brush, was quite a ministering angel. She fetched delicious cool water from the kilde (fountain), and poulticed the sick man's foot with great vigour. She had plenty to say for herself, asked all sorts of curious questions, and told us with pride, that an Englishman had once stopped there before, and fished in the lake. Every now and then, when she had ventured on an observation to the gentlemen, a blush would steal over her cheeks, as if she was ashamed at her own temerity.

Her father fetches his Sunday jacket to show me. It is very short-waisted, with a stand-up collar of velvet, and facings of

the same material. Wolves, he says, abound here. Great flocks of them scour the ice-bound lake in winter, and one of them carried off his dog.

Last autumn, a boy tracked a bear to a large hole, a short distance from here. The animal was suffered for a time to remain undisturbed. Later in the year when he had grown fat with sleep, Niels and three others armed with rifles, went to the place. One of them stirred Bruin up with a long pole. He was speedily awake, and with a growl prepared for a rush out, when the rifles put a stop to his intentions.

A few years ago an Englishman as aforesaid, fished with fly in the lake. The peasants, who are surprisingly quick at imitating, soon learned the art; our landlord among the number.

From Ælian we learn that the art of fly-fishing was known to the Romans. But at all events, the Scandinavians were ignorant of it, till John Bull invaded the

country. A friend of mine was whipping for trout in a stream four miles from Bergen. Absorbed in his occupation, he hooked and landed a good fish, without perceiving that a number of spectators had appeared upon the scene. A corpse was being carried to its last resting place in the village churchyard close by; when the mourners descrying a stranger catch a fish in a way to them so wonderful, had, with one consent, halted on the bridge, and were watching his motions with intense interest, and anything but lugubrious countenances.

"Musing melancholy gathered up its features into a smile before it was aware." Presently curiosity again gave way to dolour, and the sad procession swept on their dead-march with countenances full of intense woe. Were these some of the hired professionals of a Norwegian Shillibeer; the paid *Præficæ* of old Rome? The spot where it occurred forbids the supposition. Fly-fishing has always been my passion since my very school-

days, when I would run half-a-dozen miles between "callings-over," and plunge into a ford in the Severn, all hot as I was, for the chance of catching a brace or two of trout; but I must say that I never knew the extent of the attraction of fly-fishing, till I heard the above anecdote.

A similar transition from grave to gay is mentioned by Huc of Chinese funerals. "At a given signal, the tears are dried up, the performers do not even stop to finish a groan or a sob, and lo! there are these incomparable Chinese, laughing, gossiping, and drinking tea."

Niels makes his own flies, and showed me some pintail, jay, and golden plover feathers. He had never heard of, much less seen, a turkey, and on my showing him some feathers of that bird, he asseverated that they were those of an eagle; and nothing I could say would alter this idea. The gift of a little gold twist, and a few parrot and other feathers put him in ecstacies, and immediately

unlocking a cupboard, he produced a bottle of fair Madeira, of which he made me drink a glass. I caught some trout in the lake, and saw several natives also similarly engaged.

In no part of the country have I seen the birch tree, "lady of the wood," in greater perfection than hereabouts. The weeping variety with its pendulous tassels, filled my heart with gladness.

> "While o'er our heads the weeping birch-tree streamed
> Its branches circling, like a fountain shower."

But there is one thing which the Norwegian traveller greatly misses, the beautiful hedgerows of England. Their place is supplied by fences, ugly and ragged beyond description. These are composed of pairs of young fir trees stripped of their branches, stuck perpendicularly, like hop-poles, into the ground, at intervals of a few feet, and athwart them are placed splinters of pine, some ten feet long which rest in a slanting position

between the two poles, and are kept in their places by bindings of beech or other flexible wood. The general effect may be surmised. After a high wind, these hop-pole fences are not unfrequently out of the perpendicular, and lean across the road, in such a manner to be dangerous to the traveller after dusk. The waste of wood in the construction would be considered astonishing in any country where wood is less abundant than Norway.

Another feature of Norwegian roads, are little wooden posts painted red, and surmounted by a small gable to protect them from the weather. At first, the traveller is reminded of the little cippi in the mountain districts of the Tyrol, and in other Roman Catholic countries, erected to commemorate some dreadful accident, or narrow escape of a wayfarer. But the posts here serve quite another purpose. Each peasant in Norway is bound to keep a certain portion of the road in repair; and the inscription on each post records the name of the peasant who is

charged with the maintenance of that part of the road, and the number of ells that fall to his share. So that, in point of fact, he who runs may read a record of the name of every farm-house in Norway.

CHAPTER IV.

The District of Valders—Lingering Legends of the Black Death—Story of the Wild Girl—Story of the Peasant—Bodily Appearance assumed by the Plague—Arrival at Oyloe — A satisfactory Breakfast — Mountain Peasantry returning from Church — Costumes of Norwegian Childhood—Tame Rein-deer—Bergenstift—Characteristics of Norwegian Horses—Affection of the Norsemen for their Horses—Hatred and Fear of the Czar in Norway.

WE now are in the district of Valders. Here, as in many parts of Norway, there are lingering legends of that frightful malady, the black death, "Svart douen," which, brought to Bergen by an English ship in 1349, ravaged the country far and near. Some parts are said never to have recovered it. According to one legend the pest appeared in the shape of an old shrivelled hag,

clad in a red cloak,* who went through the country with a rake and a besom. Where she used the rake, some persons escaped with life ; but where she used the besom, every mother's son died. In many remote valleys the entire population died out; and it was not until centuries after, that vestiges were discovered of buildings which had been the abodes of men. Even now, it is said that there are all about the country, valleys where farm-houses formerly stood, but which now only contain châlets for the shepherds in the summer. Smeddal, on the Fille-field, is one of these. Another is Songalien, between Ringerike and Hallingdal, where of a Christmas day as many as thirty horses used to be seen at the door of the Parish Church. An old chronicle at Thoten states, "Pestis ultimis

* Its appearance is that of an old woman, tall, thin, and ghastly, and dressed sometimes in black, sometimes in white. She stalks along the streets, glides through the doors of the habitations of the condemned and walks once round the rooms of the victim, who is from that moment death-smitten.—*Turkish Legend of the Plague, Curzon.*

diebus Septembris hic incipiens, (A.D. 1350,) sex duravit hebdomadas, quo toto tempore pluebat." There is one curious tale of all the population of the lonely Justedal dying but one little girl, who fled into the woods on the approach of strangers, like a frightened bird. She was caught, and christened "Rypa" (Ptarmigan) in consequence. Another tale runs as follows:—

About four hundred years ago, a peasant was out with his cross-bow, in one of the lonely valleys of Valders, near the present church of Hedalen. He had discharged a bolt at a bird perched in a tree, when he heard it rattle against some hard substance. His curiosity being excited, he pushed through the thicket, and was astonished at finding an old church. Thinking it was a piece of enchantment, he adopted the usual plan of breaking the charm; viz., throwing a piece of iron over the apparition, in this case, his steel for striking a light. The building, however, did not vanish; so he proceeded towards it. In the door,

which was half open, still hung the rusty keys; at the foot of the altar lay a bear, who had chosen this for his winter retreat. The sportsman, nothing daunted, shot the animal, and remains of his skin are still preserved in the church. There was a small bell in the building, against which his arrow had struck, causing the sound which led to his discovery. The little bell is still used when anybody is lost in the forest, it being supposed that he cannot fail to hear the sound.

On one occasion, it is said that the above old hag came down to Gjerrestad lake, and asked the boatman to put her over the water. She had on that day a blue cape instead of her usual dress, so that at first he did not recognize her. On discovering who was his passenger, he became dreadfully frightened, and begged for his life in lieu of the fare. The hag upon this, took from under her cape a large book, which she opened and read as follows:—"Thy life I cannot spare, but thou shalt die an easy death." No sooner did he

get home, than he became sleepy; lay down and he was dead.

The scenery gets grander every stage. At Oyloe, where we arrived at 3 o'clock in the morning, the good folks as usual rushed out, the gentleman in trousers and shirt, the lady in nocturnal deshabille. A few minutes, however, sufficed to change her appearance on finding that Englishmen had arrived. Before long, dressed in her best, she brought us some sour milk. And next morning she appeared with her hair neatly braided into a tail behind her, with a clean shirt, the collar of which was fastened by silver studs. To her great delight three beatiful trout had been caught in the *slue* (trap) in the night, in their endeavours to get up the torrent into the Little Miosen lake above. These she brought swimming in butter; and the coffee being rendered very palatable by the aid of rich cream and barley sugar, we made a first rate breakfast.

My companion's indisposition continuing, we thought it best, although to-day was

Sunday, to push on while he was able, in order that we might be nearer a doctor, in case matters became worse. We are in the wildest part of the country, where such a thing as a doctor is never seen. Nothing of the sort nearer than Leiadalsoren, which is some fifty miles off.

At first starting, we encountered another steep ascent, which rendered an extra horse requisite. Further on, we met many of the mountain peasantry returning from church. We stopped to survey them, much to their amusement. What beauty there was among the females, was chiefly of the substantial and solid order. Their costumes were peculiar. Each wore a high shirt-collar, like a man, with a thick silk kerchief tied behind. The upper garment was a sort of polka pelisse of blue cloth, very short-waisted, confined by a belt embroidered with various coloured beads. The petticoat of various colours. But the most characteristic feature, perhaps, in their dress, was a huge pair of green worsted gloves, worn by all

without exception, although the heat was something extraordinary;* as, also, a white kerchief tied into a peculiar sort of head-dress, a little like the Riegel Haube, of Munich.

A little girl appeared amongst them, clad in exactly the same fashion. Children in this country are dressed like their parents in miniature. Boys may be seen in knee-breeches, and with the everlasting "toll" knife in his belt, half as long as his legs. The present of a two-skilling bit to the infant in question, brought a tear of satisfaction into the corner of the mother's eye. Just beyond, we perceived the priest, a burly man, with curly light hair, composing his nerves after his sermon, with a long pipe. His neck was bare, the frill having been laid aside, and his gown exchanged for a shooting-

* The Norwegian and his gloves are inseparable companions; they have no fingers, being like those worn by children in this country. These are called, in peasant language, *vante* = the French word *gant*. A Norsk boatman generally rows in such gloves.

coat, in which he was promenading before his house.

A continued ascent of twelve miles brought us to the very comfortable inn of Nystuen, where we enjoyed a dinner of capital trout, washed down by Bayersk öl. On the wall hung a picture of Ole Bull, by Paris, with the fiddler's autograph, conveying the said portrait to his friend, Mr. Nystuen of Nystuen.

The experiment which was commenced here a few years ago, of keeping tame rein-deer, has failed. The flock, which was still three hundred strong, had to be slaughtered last winter, to prevent them all falling a prey to the wolves, who had greatly increased and multiplied in these desolate regions, since a dish of savoury venison had become so readily obtainable.

The truth is, that Norwegians don't understand the keeping of rein-deer. It is only the Laps, who are constantly living with the herd, that can make it succeed in a

country like this, where beasts of prey are constantly on the look out for booty.

We now enter Bergenstift, which is pre-eminently the country of picturesque costumes. The road lies very high, as was manifest from the snow lying by its side, which, mixed with our brandy, made a most agreeable beverage.

Thanks to the skill of Norwegian engineers, it is in many places quite equal to the old Holyhead route. The pass on the other side this plateau is so narrow, that the way is wedged among the rocks close to the Leerdals Elv. The sombre gloom of the defile, and the terrific rush of the stream, boiling and foaming towards the sea, would, under any circumstances, have forcibly impressed the imagination. Most unpleasantly did they impress themselves on me. The fact was, that my horse, on this twenty-four miles' stage, was a regular good one for pace, but he had received an injury to one of his eyes, which caused him to shy and

start aside with the velocity of a broken bow. More than once he bolted, while I was in this chasm, and I was within an ace of touching the rocky wall, when we should all have been infallibly hurled from the heights above into the depths beneath; and your humble servant reduced to a jelly in less time than this has taken to narrate.

This habit of shying is one of the few faults that the Norsk horses can be accused of. The absence of blinkers, and the rottenness of the harness, do not improve the matter. A discreet traveller will not trust to the harness of the natives. It is a broken reed. Two loose wooden pins are frequently all that fasten the horse to the shafts. These the boy sometimes whittles out of a bush on starting. If one of them comes out, when your cariole is passing a precipice—there is seldom any railing to protect you—if this should happen, and your horse become alarmed—any English horse

would be, under the circumstances—why, good bye to you !

Some English writers on Norway tell you not to hold your horse up going down hill. You need not tug at him as if you were driving an English poster; but if you are wise, you will keep the reins well in hand, very gently feeling the horse's mouth. More than once, I have heard of Englishmen breaking limbs, from neglecting this precaution.

Beware, also, of trying to stop your horse too suddenly in a descent. If your cariole is heavily loaded, the chances are that the shafts will crack. My first year in Norway, I "burrah burrahed" my nag—this is the Norsk 'Wo ho'—to make him go more gently; when, halting, suddenly the shafts snapped off like barley sugar. This was in the midst of a wood, miles from a house. By the aid of an axe and ropes, which I had taken the precaution to carry with me, a tolerable splice was soon effected, and I

went on my way, scarcely rejoicing, but consoling myself with this piece of additional experience.

Sometimes, also, a Norwegian horse will, without any warning, make a sudden bolt up a bye-path; this leads to his home. The cariole will frequently suffer in consequence; as, sooner than not gain his point, the animal will, as in a case I was once witness to, rush against the fencing. By all means, see to the linch-pins. Once, when driving full speed, I heard a halloo behind, and saw a man pointing to the wheel. To my horror, the pin was out, and the wheel on the point of taking leave of the axle.

One feature of Norwegian character, which some assert to be a remnant of their original Oriental descent, is their affection for their horses. They will often talk to the animal as if he were a reasonable being, and he seems perfectly to understand them. At every hill, the boy jumps down, and runs by your side to save his horse. It is amus-

ing to see the various devices adopted by the peasants to prevent the Englishman from over driving. When there are many travellers in company, the worst horse is sure to be harnessed to the leading cariole, so that Mr. Thingumby's "carriage stops the way" throughout the stage. Sometimes they pretend that the harness wants altering, and by this means get their darling a respite. The common way to moderate the speed of the Jehu is to cry "burrah, burrah;" or "fole, fole;" or they utter a low whistle as if they were humming a tune. The traveller all the while, who is not up to the dodge, can't imagine why his horse is going so slow, and applies his whip by way of reminder. Upon this, the peasant throws off all disguise, cries out, "Quile hesten lidt," (Give the horse a little rest,) jumps down, and pats his favourite, ruefully addressing him as "stakkels." (Poor fellow.)

When the horse is not pressed too hard, they immediately commence asking questions.

"Hvad er de for een man?" *i.e.*, where do you come from?

"Fra Engeland."

"From England? What is your name? Are you married? Let me see your watch."

"Hvor staaer med ufreden?" How is the war going on?

"Pretty well; but the Swedes won't help us."

"Oh, but they must, we will make them."

Then again, "Are you from Scotland?"

They seem to have a great idea of Scotland.

"Are there high hills there? Is the water there so clear as that in the lake?"

The attendant is almost sure to be a small peasant proprietor, from whom a good deal may be gathered about the country. He is generally very fairly educated; knows something about geography, and a good deal more than a person in his rank of life in

England, of the doctrines of the Christian faith, or the political institutions of his country. This year, I observed that the peasants generally were more than ordinarily polite. In fact, their great bug-bear is the Czar. They are terribly alarmed lest they should awake some fine day, and find a portion of the country—Finmark, for instance, upon which the Muscovite has long had his eye—already passed away from them. In their simplicity, they imagine that every Englishman who visits their valleys for pleasure's sake, must be enormously rich, and, of course, a Storthingsman, *i.e.*, member of parliament, and, consequently, can influence the government in their favour.

Now and then, you might almost fancy that the peasants were talking English. "Somme weke" sounded uncommonly like what it really means, "some weeks." Educated persons would have said, "nogle uge." So "what d'ye say," instead of "hvad sige de," startled me not a little. A gentleman

from the north of England told me that he got on better in the out-of-the-way valleys, with his native tongue, than with his imperfect Norsk.

CHAPTER V.

Norway singularly bare of Ancient Historical Remains—Antique Wooden Churches—Churches used as Museums in Norway—Laing's assertion respecting the paucity of small birds in Norway disproved—Dinner at Leirdalsoren—The German Traveller's Disappointment—The Glacier of Justedal—A Boat-Voyage to Gudvangen.

NORWAY is singularly bare of ancient architectural remains. It is in vain for the traveller, as he journeys up the valley of the Glommen or Gulbrandsdal, to look for such relics of feudal grandeur, as crown the heights overlooking the Rhine. Of the castles of Rollo and the Vikings, not one stone is left upon another. Nor, indeed, was this the soil to grow castles. It was always a country of Udallers, who cared not, and,

perhaps, had not the means, to rear such structures as were the offspring of the feudal system. But see! that is surely a ruin perched upon yon crag, and frowning down upon the valley below.

> "Buttress and rampire circling round,
> And mighty keep and tower."

You approach nearer, and find that what you took for the Borg of a Viking, is nought but a grim mass of rock, upheaved by some sudden convulsion of nature, from the smoother sward around.

It is the same with the churches. There is a ruin of a priory at Hammer on the Miosen Lake, and the cathedrals at Trondjem and Stavanger are very beautiful specimens of Norwegian Gothic, but these are the exceptions. The reason is, that the ancient Norskmen mostly used wood for their buildings, as being cheaper and more easily worked than stone; and so, even at the present day, in this country, where customs

and manners have been retained that prevailed many centuries ago, the people still continue, for the most part, to pray and lodge in buildings of wood. Fire and rot would, in time, do their work upon so destructible a material, till, at length, nothing was left to set agoing the fancies of the poet, or whet the appetite of the antiquary.

But there are still two churches in Norway, which, though built of wood, at a very remote period, are existing almost in their original state, viz., those of Hitterdal in Tellemarken, and that of Borgund, which we passed to-day. It is nine hundred years old, the arches and apse Byzantine in character, with a quaint gallery running round the interior, supported on wooden pillars. The Norsk pine, of which this tiny edifice is constructed, has done its work well; its excellent state of preservation being, perhaps, partly attributable to the thick coat of tar which it receives annually, and to the careful ventilation of the floor timbers. In building

their dwelling houses, the people pay especial attention to this last particular, each corner of the building after the manner of our hay-stacks, being reared on a rock or stone, so as to create a thorough draught beneath.

In the gallery stands a stuffed reindeer of unusually large dimensions, which the precentor informed me, was shot close by the church, a hundred years ago. This idea of converting a church into a museum is not uncommon in Norway. In the Church of Hedal, not far hence, there used to be a vast bear-skin, the exterior of a female bear, who, when the parish was exterminated by the black death, was brought to bed at the altar, and discovered and shot by a strolling hunter, as mentioned elsewhere.

The corkscrew descent down which the traveller plunges into Leirdal, was constructed by Captain Finne.

The traps in the river tell tales of salmon; and the blanching scull over the door of the change-house at Husum —

once the property of a bear who killed a cow close by, and returning to clear the decks, was waylaid and shot by the owner, by way of exchange—set a Briton thinking whether it might not be advisable to stop, and try for some small game of the same sort. I rather suspect that these are baits intended expressly for Englishmen. So, not unfrequently, reindeer horns are stuck outside a change-house, to indicate the proximity of those animals.

Water-wagtails, mostly in their primrose stage of plumage, wheat-ears, yellow-hammers, grouse, sparrows, and ring-ousel, all of which crossed our route as we whirled down the valley, disprove Laing's assertion, about the paucity of small birds in Norway.

At Leirdalsoren, which is a small town on one of the branches of the Sogne Fjord, whence a steamer plies to Bergen, we made up our minds to have a real good dinner. Our Christiania supply was exhausted; and as, with the exception of a small piece of

sucking-pig, we had met with no meat on our journey, which had now extended to nearly three hundred miles, we had a sense of vacuum within, not quite agreeable after Oxford living. There was a famished look about us both, which was not to be mistaken. Had a Yankee seen us, he would have doubtless observed, "Stranger, your appetite is in full blast, I guess." But, alas! no meat was to be had. The people have no larders. The science of good eating has yet to be learned by them. Porridge, porridge, porridge, is still the cry; but I was born on the wrong side of the border for that; besides which, Scotch porridge and Norsk porridge are a very different affair, and I must confess, upon the whole, to a preference for the flesh-pots.

Report says, that philosophers, who have carefully investigated the condition of worlds beyond the sky, have ascertained that, if by any possibility you could get to Jupiter, you would be multiplied in weight by two

and a half. But, depend upon it, nothing of the kind will happen to you in Norway. Strangely enough, the people don't seem to suffer from the diet. It is true, I have seen lads of eighteen no bigger than a lad of fourteen in England. But somehow, they grow into big men. So that Brillat Savarins' gastronomic maxim, "Tell me what a man eats, and I will tell you what he is," will not apply to these people; at all events to their men. Fir-bread, which, I suppose, would be about as palatable as the fern-bread eaten in France, in 1739, is seldom, if ever, eaten now in this country.

Talking of Norsk living, I am reminded of an anecdote of a German, travelling in this country; who, on arriving at the house of a bonder, inquired for food.

"Ja, ja," was the peasant's answer, "efter fattig leilighed:" *i. e.*, "what my poor house affords:" "mon petit possible," as a Gaul would have said.

Porridge and flat-bread were the result.

When mein Herr was next pressed with hunger, a similar question on his part produced a similar answer, and the same result. On subsequently getting no other reply to the same application, being imperfectly acquainted with the language, he rejoined "that he was tired of *that* (fattig leilighed), hadn't they got some other little dish?"

The Norwegians consider it quite a sin to slaughter their oxen and fatlings in the summer. In the autumn, when the cattle return from the mountains, the surplus are killed and salted for winter consumption. Simple and gentle are pretty nearly alike in this abstinence from animal food. The cadets of the King's school at Christiania, who live in camp for a month in the summer, have meat only twice-a-week. And so it was that all mine host could give us, in the shape of a *pièce de resistance*, at Leirdalsoren, were some wretched little whitings!

The country around this abounds in scenes of varied interest. The glaciers of Justedal, explored by Forbes, the wild scenery of the Jotunfjeld, and the shores of the outer Sogne, rendered classical by Tegners, Frithiof, and Urnes, the scene of the tragic story of Habor and Signe, are all within easy reach.

My companion being now somewhat convalescent, we resolved to charter an "eight-oared boat," *i. e.*, a boat with four pair of sculls, to convey us to Gudvangen, distant thirty-six English miles. The wheels being unscrewed, our vehicles and baggage were soon stowed away on board. Norsk Charons are proverbially slow, but proportionably lasting, provided they are allowed to go at their own pace. Not a puff of wind to help on our craft! But, notwithstanding this, with the exception of the stroke-oar, the ludicrous contortions of whose visage in his efforts to keep awake, caused no little merriment, the crew seemed little fatigued with their

all-night row on the bosom of the Sogne. Hans, be it observed, had been treated by us to a glass of schnaps, which satisfactorily accounted for his tendency to doze.

CHAPTER VI.

The Grandest Scenery in Norway—The Keelfoss behind Gudvangen—Horses for Kongsberg Fair—A Female Postboy—A Phenomenon explained—The Church at Vossevangen—The last Popish Bishop of Bergen—Bolstadören—Hot Weather—Frequency of Conflagrations—An ill-omened Name—English Quakers—Origin of Quakerism in Norway—The Laws of the Conscription—A curious Burial Custom—A Quaker objects to it—The Majestic Hornelin—A Vision of Sir Walter Scott—Stadland—Patience of the Norwegian Character.

WE were now in the heart of the grandest scenery in Norway. I can recall nothing in Switzerland, or the Pyrenees, to match it. And then, what a witching hour for seeing it! None of your "gay beams of lightsome day" to flout *it*, and roast *us*.

Just sufficiently below the horizon not to hide the main features of the view, the sun draped the objects around, as it were, in a gauze of violet hue. No language, either of the pen, or the brush, can bring out the peculiar sublimity of these scenes. As the penny-a-liners would say, they must be seen to be believed. Salvator would have been quite out of place here. Sheer precipices, two thousand feet high, grim and threatening, fit haunts for the mighty Jotul, of Scandinavian mythology, by the side of which a "tall Amiral" would have been dwarfed to a cock-boat; the waterfalls bursting from the mountain-tops, and seeming in the shadow like gigantic columns of silver standing immoveably fixed on a plain of emerald; the recesses of the Fjord growing dimmer and dimmer in the distance until they are swallowed up in the narrowing gorges.

Suffice it to say, setting aside the bathos, that we by this time had become quite recon-

ciled to our scanty dinner at Leirdalsören, and the thousand and one *désagrémens* of Norwegian travelling; and yet, where one John Bull is to be seen in these parts, their name is legion on the Rhine.

The Keelfoss behind Gudvangen is a fall of two thousand feet. Advancing up the valley you ascend a hog-backed mountain by a series of seven terraces, which is flanked on either side by a gigantic cascade. The one on the right was spanned by a complete rainbow, the ends of which rested on the dark pool below. The water, when half way down, strikes on a projecting rock, the concussion causing it to leap upwards again in a tumultuous and never diminished volume.

On the next stage from Stalheim, we passed a large drove of horses and cows on their way to Kongsberg fair. These droves often travel for weeks over the Fjeld, which they seldom quit till near their destination. The drovers bivouacking under the rocks,

and the cattle cropping such herbage as the mountains afford; so that the "entertainment for man and beast," if not "good," is certainly cheap.

My schuss, or post-boy, next stage, was a strapping pige or damsel. She had kept me a long time waiting; and to make up for lost time, trotted her pony up to the station at a rapid pace. She was mounted Amazonian fashion: and was minus a shoe which she had lost in her hurry and excitement. She was built somewhat upon the Hottentot mould; her flaxen hair was braided with red tape, and wound very becomingly round her head. A yellow kerchief embellished her neck, while a purple boddice and green petticoat completed her costume.

In due time she grew quite confiding, and I learned that she was betrothed to a rustic swain of the neighbourhood.

At Vossevangen we found some fresh meat at last, in the shape of very tolerable lamb. The unusual circumstance was explained,

however, by the fact that F. Tiedemann, the painter, a Norwegian by birth, but who generally resides at Düsseldorf was, together with a brother artist, stopping here painting *genre* subjects. Those who have seen his pictures exhibited in Paris and London, will be aware of the peculiar excellencies of this artist in the delineation of Norwegian customs. His book, illustrative of Norwegian peasant life, we shall, perhaps, refer to hereafter.

While on the subject of painting, I may remark that there is a profusion of wonderful daubs in the church here into which I strolled. The Apostles, Kings of Judah, and other Scripture characters which crowded the panelling round the choir and pulpit stairs, are anything but prepossessing in appearance. The edifice is of stone, but architecturally devoid of interest. The last popish Bishop of Bergen, who fled to this place at the Reformation, is buried in the Church. He is said to have loved strong Hamburg

ale, and to have been devoted more to gain than godliness.

At Bolstadören there had been a gay wedding, and, though we arrived long after midnight, the place was all in commotion. A fiddler, as drunk as those gentry proverbially are, being among the rollicking blades who crowded round our vehicles. The Englishmen, who have leased the river, have not arrived, so mine host has been doing a little business, among the salmon, on his own account. After some travelling, over sea and water, we found ourselves at Bergen.

This is, beyond doubt, the most interesting city in the country. The neat villas, beer houses, and avenues in the outskirts, reminded me forcibly of a German town. One part is still called the German quarter. To our consternation we found the two hotels and the lodging-house full, and it was only by the assistance of a watchman, who was on his nocturnal patrol, that we at last obtained shelter in a private house.

We supped on dried salmon and tongue—not a particle of fresh meat is to be got in the place, which may be accounted for, perhaps, by Fahrenheit marking 96° in the shade. In such an atmosphere, sleep was hopeless, so I was up very early to explore. As usual, the Museum of Natural History and Antiquities, was not visible. After all, the sights most worth seeing, perhaps, in Bergen, are the fish-market, the bustle of the streets, and the varied costumes of the lower classes. The place has, by degrees, become the great centre of trade, and is the chief entrepôt of the valuable produce of the Northern fisheries on the one hand, and the imports of Hamburg on the other.

Fires, as is well known, are of frequent occurrence here; the water casks placed at each door being of little use in arresting a conflagration. A matter of one hundred and eighty houses were in this way cleared off on the 30th of May last: and as yet no attempt has been made to rebuild them. How tor-

toise like the pace of this people! In this, the most populous place in the country, which is in constant communication with France and Germany, the household arrangements are no better than up the country. Beds too short, washing-basins degraded to the size of the slop-basins which garnish our English tea-table; not an egg cup to be had for love or money, and the boiled cream ladled out of a basin by a sort of Apostle spoon, instead of appearing in a jug.

We left Bergen by the "Aeger" steamer, rather an ill-omened name for a steam-boat, reminding one of the "sick man" about whom the Czar was so solicitous. Aegir is the name for the old Scandinavian god of the ocean, and this was the appellation intended for the vessel, but by some bungle of the sponsors, it received its present misnomer, and it is considered unlucky to alter it. By his wife Rana, Aegir had nine daughters, who became the billows, the currents, and the storms: and it is no doubt to this family

that the present dwellers on the banks of the Trent, (themselves of Danish blood), owe the name Aigre, applied to the bore which at certain periods rushes up that river, and which the superstition of the early settlers might transform into the approach of the river god.

An Englishman was on board who had been fishing to the southward, and was now going to try his fortune further north, where the rivers are much later. We met him subsequently with some trophies of his prowess as a sportsman, namely, four reindeer heads, the owners of which he had brought down on the islands near Carlsö. The proprietor of the ground received five dollars for every deer shot: and I cannot help thinking that they are nothing but the progeny of tame deer which have been allowed to run wild.

An English Quaker and his lady were also among the company. He had been preaching at Bergen; but being ignorant of the language, a Norwegian "Friend" from Stavanger acted as interpreter. As is well

known, there is a small congregation of Quakers, two hundred at the most, in Stavanger. They are the only Protestant dissenters in the country. There is also a congregation of Roman Catholics at Christiania, where they are now rearing a large church. The origin of the Quakers in Norway is as follows:—

Early in this century, some Norwegians who were carried to England as prisoners of war, were visited, while in prison, by English Quakers, who lent them Bartlett's "Apology." The arguments of the "drab-coloured" folks seem to have had such an effect on some of the prisoners, that on their return to Stavanger, they separated from the State Church of the country. Persecution was the consequence; under which they were comforted by the visits of William Allen and Thomas Shilleto. Matters went on thus to 1845, when liberty of worship was granted them by law. They are still, however, forced to serve in the army, and it was only this

year that one of the community, who refused to do so, was sentenced to a solitary confinement of thirty days.

By a recent law, shopkeepers, as well as farmers, are now liable to conscription. The method of selection seems rather arbitrary: a king's commissioner comes and holds a court for the purpose; pitching on what young men he pleases of those who present themselves. The Stavanger Quaker absented himself on the occasion, when the Commissioner swore that he should serve on shipboard; which service is considered the most laborious of the two. Eventually, however, the threat came to nothing, and the man of peace escaped. At times, though rarely, it happens that their chattels are sold for not paying tithe.

A curious custom came out in the course of conversation, in relation to the State Church. The burial service is a very short affair, and it frequently happens, that the corpse is interred without the intervention of

the clergyman: a few psalms being chanted by the relatives. If the priest is present, all he has to do, is to take a modicum of earth in a wooden spoon, which he casts upon the coffin, saying: "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." This part of the ceremony is considered essential; so much so that if the priest be not present at the interment, a stick is stuck through the mould down to the coffin, which, when the clergyman next appears, is duly extracted; the wooden spoon is again put in requisition, and, uttering the above words, he pours into the orifice a little earth, which is supposed, perhaps erroneously, always to reach the coffin.

Now, it came to pass, that the father of a convert to Quakerism died, and was buried in the cemetery of the Lutheran church to which he belonged. The son, who was an unlettered individual, and knew nothing, doubtless, of the touching expostulations of the shade of the classic Archytas, con-

sidered the whole a senseless superstition, and would not permit the priest, on his subsequent arrival, to spoon the dust into the said bung-hole. The priest, jealous of his privilege, for which he, no doubt, received a valuable consideration, lodged a complaint before the magistrate; the "Friends" were appealed to, and they decided that the young man's interference was unjustifiable, as his father was buried according to the Lutheran rites.

As is well known, with the exception of at two or three places, such as the Vest Fjord, Folden and Stadland, the course of the steamer is almost landlocked from this to Tromsö, traversing, as it does, the winding natural canal, that threads the thousand islands fringing the coast. On the second day, we were close under the majestic Hornelen, considered the highest sea cliff in Norway. It is separated from the mainland by a narrow sound, one of the handiworks of that redoubtable miracle-worker,

St. Olaf. People of discernment can still descry the little troll upon the summit, who, when the rocks were cleft by the saint, came to the light of day, pretty much as Minerva did from Jupiter's head; but, unlike her, he had the misfortune to be turned by the man-midwife into stone.

Here is the entrance to the Hormingdal river, where an Oxford don has taken up his fishing quarters. The priest of the district is very fond of the English language and literature. In proof of which, on my friend's first visit to the parsonage, his reverence sent his son for the English volumes in his possession. In due time, the lad re-appeared, staggering under the weight of a huge tray, on which reposed the whole of the works of Walter Scott, not to mention James. But the former author was his idol. Scott was his all in all. "Yes," continued the priest, in tones of rapture, "and there is Walter Scott himself." The announcement was startling; but in

such a land of trolls and nixies, what if the eidolon himself! but no—it was his own son that the priest was pointing to; his admiration for the author of "Waverly" having extended to the length of his christening his son by that name.

The Englishman above-mentioned, and the merchant, who is also master of a little English, occasionally correspond. The latter's letters are addressed,

"PRIEST P.
"PROFESSOR BY —— COLLEGE.
"TO OXFORD."

Last year, I hear, on my friend's proceeding to the "Rivulet to become some salmon," as the merchant phrased it, some peasants fancied that he was a Russian come to take soundings.

Further north is Stadland, where the gulf-stream is said to strike Norway first in its northerly course. Here we were kept

at a stand-still for twenty-four hours, by an intense fog. I had here a good opportunity of observing the patience of the Norwegian character. The utmost good-nature prevailed among them, which Meagles, in Quarantine would have done well to imitate. Not a grumble was to be heard among the crowds that filled the vessel, which was rather surprising, considering that the good folks seemed to have nothing whatsoever to occupy them. John Bull was quiet, but then he and all his fraternity were deep in their books, or otherwise employed. "How good-tempered these people are," moralized the fair Quakeress, "they are so *impersonal*:" Anglice unselfish? "How kind too they are to the animals. At Christmas time they always put out a sheaf for the birds. Do you know, I heard, that this is done even at the railway station at Christiania!"

"Oh yes," replied the mercurial Englishman, "and porridge for the fairies also, eh? Joking apart, however, I allow that they are

kind; but then they are so slow. Not a particle of go in them. Perfect zoophytes. The only stagnant pools in the country are to be found in society. No wit, no scintillation, no dashing observation escapes from them. And then they haven't a jot of expression about their faces."

"Affreuse!" whirred out a little Frenchman who had just returned from the Crimea, and was no doubt mentally comparing the somewhat insipid features of the Scandinavian *blondes* with the dark lustrous eyes and piquant looks of the voluptuous houris of the East. "C'est un pays épouvantable," continued the Gaul, "rien à manger. Croyez-vous, monsieur," he added, "in the whole of Bergen, not a soupçon of potage or fresh meat — no fruit, no pears, no plums."

"The cuisine is very indifferent," said I, "a gastronomic regenerator is much wanted. In short, everything here seems still to be in the rough, but there is a very good material

to work upon, which will probably some time be utilized."

"These people have no palates," reiterated the Englishman, "according to the proverb, every one must eat a peck of dirt in his life; but I say, if you travel in Norway, you will get through that quantity in a twelvemonth."

Sooth to say, fresh air, fresh water, and cleanliness are sadly at a discount in this country. Not a single port is allowed to be opened in the sleeping cabin. Fortunately, however, there is a small skylight in front of the wheel, which the English on board, by a united effort, have succeeded in preventing from being closed during the night. In some of these steamers, the said skylight actually opens into the saloon above, where several people are sleeping; but nobody seems to be incommoded by the want of ventilation. The men lie down in their berths, night after night, and do the smallest conceivable amount of washing on rising in the morning. We breakfast at nine, on beef-steaks floating in a

superabundance of greasy onion sauce. Minute flakes of dried salmon, ditto tongue, ham, pressed beef and cheese, with coffee or tea, schnaps and Bayersk öl, furnish the repast. The beverage that "cheers but not inebriates" is called by the natives "The vand," *i. e.* tea water, a term admirably fitted for the washy composition in question.

Dinner at two. Soup, fish, or fish-pudding with *rôti* of some kind, and pudding to follow; but no cheese. The said fish-pudding is the triumph of Norsk cookery. The fish, being boned, is beaten into a pulp, perfectly free from lumps, cream is added; it is then baked, and a pudding of the consistency of stiff batter pudding, and beautifully white, is the result. By this means, fish of very indifferent flavour, *e. g.* the coal fish, which is never eaten by the upper classes in England, are transformed into a really savoury mess.

Tea at eight o'clock. Lobsters, cheese, and a repetition of the minute flakes. There is a large supply of lobsters on board for the

passengers' consumption. Their price at Bergen is as low as five pence for the largest, and two pence half-penny for the smallest. They are caught all the way up to Trondjem either in pots or by means of tongs, put down into the water, in the same way as oysters are caught by the Maltese fisherman. The latter, by pouring a little oil on the water, manage to see objects at great depths, and by pulling a string attached to the pincers below, never fail to nab their unsuspecting victims.

CHAPTER VII.

Method of Ascertaining whether the Herrings are off the Coast—The Herring Fishery at Stavanger—Söndmör and Nördmör—Influence of the Fisheries on the Persons Engaged in them—Aalesund—A Nice Perfume—A Norsk Beauty—The Omen—A Love-Song.

THERE is a curious, but simple, contrivance, used in this country for ascertaining whether the herrings are off the coast. The instrument, in question, is like an enormous speaking trumpet, say about four feet long, with the broad end glazed, and the other large enough to fit the whole face. The glazed end being placed under water, a person looking through the other end can easily dis-

cern objects at almost incredible depths. By this means, the Christie Johnstons of Scandinavia readily discover whether the silver-mailed hosts have arrived in sufficient numbers to make it worth while to let down the nets for a draught: an operation which, from their great length, is attended with much labour; and is, therefore, not ventured upon at haphazard.

At night, another method is adopted for ascertaining the numbers of the herrings. A piece of lead is let down by a fine cord into the deep, and if the herrings are passing in any numbers sufficient to make it worth while to fish, they may be distinctly felt bumping against the lead in their course.

The herring fishery at Stavanger, and up the coast, is fast increasing in importance. Sometimes, men will make a small fortune in a single night. The Sild fishery—I have often heard this word used of the herring by the fishermen of Scarborough—is pursued during the three first months of the year.

The iron-bound coast of Söndmör and Nördmör, in the vicinity of Stavanger, are the head-quarters of this branch of industry, with which the welfare of the country is so intimately connected. The desert islands and stony capes are suddenly peopled by a motley male population, who swarm as if by enchantment out of the inmost recesses of the Fjords, which furrow the southern coast: just in the same way as the narrow creeks that lie nestled under the frowning walls of the Luffodens, about the same period of the year, become suddenly the gathering place for a set of piscatorial invaders from the north of Norway: of whose doings more anon.

To lodge these multitudes, a quantity of cabins are set up along the coast, into which the bipeds are packed almost as closely as the herrings in the barrels; and as may readily be imagined a most fish-like smell pervades the former as well as the latter receptacle. The people, otherwise so quiet and phlegmatic, seem

at such times quite beside themselves with the excitement of their occupation. Indeed, the Babel of sounds attendant upon the launching of a herring net has become proverbial, " Det var som en man skulde ud med en silde not."

At the same time, this kind of life must necessarily exercise a considerable influence on the people regularly engaged in it. They are not only thus accustomed to hardships and privations, but also taught a lesson of social forbearance. Each gang has a leader, whom the rest must obey as implicitly as the soldier does his officer.

Each individual must, consequently, give up their own plans, and frequently sacrifice their own comfort for the promotion of the common good. It being fully understood that this cannot be otherwise, if their venture is to be a successful one, what cannot be cured is quietly submitted to: and the result is that, notwithstanding the concourse of so many people together, peace and quiet are

the order of the day, and scenes of violence are of very rare occurrence.

The spring herrings are, at times, very capricious in their habits. From 1784 to 1808, they were not to be seen at all. Once before, I understood they had a similar fit of sulks, and absented themselves for sixty years; but during the last forty years, they have been on regular visiting terms. Formerly, they were fished for north of Stad, but of late chiefly about Stavanger, and down as far as Lindesnaes. The existence of Stavanger depends on the Sild fishery. The present population is nearly nine thousand, and has doubled within the last twenty years. The autumn herring fishery is now chiefly in Namdal, near Trondjem. This herring is supposed to be the same as that which visits the coast of Scotland. Stavanger exports more herrings than even Bergen. Sweden and Prussia take more than two-thirds of the spring Sild. The rest goes to Russia. Anchovies, equal in flavour to those of the Mediterranean, are

caught all the way from Bergen to Fredericks-hall, and are exported to Hamburg and Altona, chiefly from Christiania and Christiansund. In 1846, six hundred thousand lobsters were exported, chiefly to England.

There are one or two other sorts of herrings besides those already mentioned.

Aalesund, from which Rollo sailed to conquer Normandy, is driving a very thriving trade in the salt-fish line with Spain. Not long since, as many as thirty Spanish vessels were lying at the same time in the harbour, which offers the securest refuge imaginable, close to the open sea, with no long Fjord to travel up, as at Trondjem. What would Norway do, if there came a downfall of Popery in Italy and Spain? "Othello's occupation" would, indeed, be gone, if there were no *maigre* days observed to give an impulse to fish-curing.

As we proceeded northwards, quantities of those curious looking old fashioned vessels, yclept Jaegts, passed us on their voyage to

Bergen, propelled by their one huge sail. They differ from the jaegt which is a kind of small sloop. The cargo on board is piled half up the mast; the lower part of the sail being unlaced and removed to admit of this being done. At a distance, it is difficult for an unpractised eye to make out the nature of this unwieldly top-hamper; but let them only come betwixt the wind and your nobility, and your olfactories will not be slow to discern what it really is; to wit, dried fish going to Bergen; the savour of which, to an English nose, at all events, is not quite so attractive as Attar of Roses.

"Nice perfume that, Sir," observed a merchant from Tromsö to me.

"Do you think so," I replied.

"Yes very, it smells of Hamburg dollars."

The colloquy of Vespasian and Titus occurred to my mind. Our friend the Frenchman held his nose, and pronounced the odour to be "affreuse! Mille tonnerre!"

His invocation was not without effect;

for before long, as we approached Molde, we had a specimen of what a Norwegian thunderstorm is. Heavy clouds had suddenly removed from view the many snow-capped peaks that rose at intervals far away to the eastward, forming a sublime amphitheatre; Romsdal's jagged horn overtopping the rest. Presently, as it were, a signal-rocket darted across the scene, and then came the faint booming of a distant gun. And now the jetty pall, which had with the speed of magic mantled each bay and fjord, indenting the coast, together with the bluffs that flanked their entrances, was ever and anon partially dissipated, and you beheld, for an instant, bathed in lilac-tinted light, what seemed the frowning portals of some dark and unfathomable cavern; the long-drawn depths of which kept re-bellowing to the roar of a thousand cannon. Mille tonnerre with a witness!

There was one young lady on board, in whose favour the Frenchman was induced to make an exception to his sweeping contempt

for the looks of the Norsk fair sex. The most fastidious would have found something to admire in her appearance. Miss Magdelena D., who was returning home from a finishing school in the capital, and might be nineteen years of age, possessed a complexion as transparent as the water of her own fjords. Her nose was a little, a very little turned up, and her mouth, perhaps, a thought too wide; but then it was filled with such teeth, and her lips were so full and fresh, and she laughed so sweetly, and as she did so, her eyes lighted up so gaily, and her brown hair, braided so neatly round her well-turned head, was so silky, and glossy, and luxuriant, and her head was so well set on (that's a great point), and her figure so supple and graceful, with none of the stiffness and gawkiness that prevail here; and altogether she was so natural and unaffected, that I don't wonder the Frenchman became mollified and pronounced her *gracieuse*. The Captain too, to whom she appears to be no stranger, is bent upon improving the

opportunity. We English feel ourselves quite neglected by him. See! he has flirted to such an extent, that he has evidently become quite spoony; that cigar has gone out; and still he has been sucking at it this half-hour. Well done Fröken Magdalena!

This was not the only bit of romance that I met with on board. At one station, I saw a lad go ashore, and return with a dog-daisy in his hand. Here it is called Prest-krave, "Clergyman's ruff." With anxious countenance he began plucking off the petals of the flower one by one; on my asking him what he was doing, he confessed with a blush that he was taking an omen. In Faust, Gretchen does the same thing.

The formula was as follows, as he pulled off each leaf in succession:

1. She loves.
2. With all her heart.
3. With secret pain.
4. In her deepest soul.
5. But tells no one.

6. Only a little.

7. Alas! not at all; and so begin again. The words that correspond to the last leaf settling the state of her affections.

At another period of the voyage, I heard two or three peasants joining in the most dolorous ditty conceivable; the words being printed on a broad sheet. I found this was a love-song.

CHAPTER VIII.

Fanne Fjord—Fishing Quarters at Feva—Salmon Fishing during an Eclipse—Lange Fjord—A long Chase—Pastor B.—Rough Music at a Pic-nic—Eagle and Salmon—The Sea-Serpent—A Phenomenon explained.

THE vast fjord to the east of the neat little town of Molde, at which we stopped to coal, pursuing its course inland, after a time forks into three branches, Romsdal Fjord, Lange Fjord, and Fanne Fjord. My first year in Norway, deceived by the map, I went down the last mentioned fjord in search of a salmon stream, but it fared with me as with Matthews in "Used up," when he looked

into the crater of Vesuvius. I found "nothing in it."

The Rauma, on the contrary, which flows into the head of the Romsdal Fjord, is a noted salmon stream. The chief fishing quarters are at Feva, where a couple of Englishmen, who rent the fishing, may always be found in the summer. The river above this, which after having long been confined in its rocky straight-waistcoat and madly dashed itself about to its heart's content, is suddenly let loose and permitted to expatiate in a large and roomy pool, quiets down wonderfully under the change of treatment. Here then, is the great resort of the salmon, who rest for a considerable time at the spot, before braving the terrors of the rapids above. Lord P. caught upwards of thirty salmon in this pool in one afternoon, some years ago. It lies under the shadow of the Witch-Peaks and Romsdals Horn, so that the sun is never long on the water, and you may generally take salmon here, when elsewhere it is out of the question.

I was at this spot on the day of the eclipse in 1852; but so bright and hot was the weather that not even in the pool would the salmon stir, though tempted by whatever of gorgeous or sombre in the way of flies Eaton or Jones, or amateur skill, could produce. But no sooner did this eclipse begin, than the salmon began to rise, and the sport was capital. A huge fellow soon lay panting on the grass, the *spolia opima* of the occasion. If I remember rightly, he weighed thirty-six pounds. Fine salmon were also captured this year, many miles higher up the stream.

In an out-of-the-way nook of the Lange Fjord, called Eridsfjord, there is a salmon stream, little known indeed, but where I have captured fish of twenty-eight pounds. Here an Englishman has recently purchased a property, with the right of fishing in some of the best pools. The whole course of the river is not above three miles, terminating at that distance from the Fjord in a lake fourteen miles long, up to which the salmon run for the purpose of

spawning. Were not scenery a drug in this country, it would be worth while to dwell on the glories of this lake, its waterfalls, glaciers &c., as well as on the splendid trout fishing in another lake beyond.

On one occasion, I hooked a salmon in a pool at Eridsfjord, which led me a chase of half a mile down stream. No sooner had I sprung out of the boat, as I thought, to play him, and land him, than off he dashed frantically for the pool below; and had we not been a match for him, jumping into our boat and the boatman rowing with all his might and main, we should infallibly have lost the fish and our tackle likewise. After playing this game for half an hour, my man rushed in and gaffed him in a shallow part of the stream. We reckoned on a forty-pounder, at least, but were wrong, as he was under twenty pounds, *hooked in the back fin!*

Several miles to the westward on a picturesque knoll, jutting into the Lange Fjord, dwelt Pastor B. the clergyman of the district,

who was a truly kind hospitable person, and smoked his pipe everlastingly, with most good-natured equanimity, as if nothing ever had, or ever could happen to ruffle his tranquillity. And yet, strange to say, his life was one everlasting strife with his neighbours and parishioners. Law-suits were apparently indispensable to his, and their, existence. He has since then obtained a living in the south.

"How is my friend Pastor B.?" I asked this summer of a gentleman who lives in his present neighbourhood.

"Oh! very well in health, but over head and ears in a process," was the answer.

This taste for law appears indigenous to the country. The old Scandinavians, as is well known, were highly litigious; the Normans, in the time of the Conqueror, according to historians, were of a similar turn. And even at the present day, Normandy is conspicuous above all the other provinces of France, for the great number of law-suits which annually take place in it. So much for the

undying influence of blood. In like manner, observes Worsaae, the most persevering seamen in France are the inhabitants of Dieppe, and the most celebrated admiral of France, a native of Normandy.

On one occasion, we and the good priest's family got up a pic-nic to a small island lying out in the Fjord. Never shall I forget the hullabaloo that greeted our invasion of this ancient solitary reign of the wild fowl. There were maternal and paternal guillemots, and terns, and oyster-catchers, and every kind of gull, soaring aloft, and joining in all kinds of music; and there were young guillemots, and terns, and oyster-catchers, and every kind of gull, screaming in concert, and waddling off over the rocks in all directions; and there were half-fledged ditto's hiding their heads in each other's down in the extremity of their panic; and there were mottled eggs ditto lying in two's and three's and four's in every nook and cranny of the island.

The oyster-catcher (Kehl) is regarded with

especial affection by the Norwegians. Like the crow of Greenland, and the cuckoo of Great Britain, he is looked upon as the harbinger of spring. According to Pennant, however, the Laps look upon the oyster-catcher with especial detestation, as they suppose that when they are engaged in the seal chase, it gives notice to the seal of their approach, and thus frightens them away. I could not hear of any such notion while I was in Lapland.

One day, my companion and myself were out in separate boats, shooting mergansers and other wild fowl, on the Fjord. At length, tired of the sport, I bid my man stop rowing, while I watched the movements of an eagle, who was poising himself over that part of the Fjord where the river entered it. A startled heron had just risen from the willows near the mouth of the river, and was flapping his great black wings inland with what speed he could. But our friend, the eagle, was evidently intent on other game. Like a person of

aristocratic notions, he began his dinner with fish. Suddenly swooping downwards into the water, he for a few seconds became hidden from view in the wave which his descent had caused. Presently he slowly extricated himself, with a large salmon in his talons, with which he steadily rose, soaring higher and higher at each majestic sweep of his pinions, till he reached his eyrie thousands of feet high on the precipice above.

Casting my eye lazily from this noble sight along the base of the stupendous barrier of limestone that girded that side of the Fjord, which was in deep shadow, and as still as a mill-pond, I became aware that something was slowly moving along in the water close to the rocks, at the distance of some quarter of a mile from where I was. It was a black slimy object, seemingly about sixty feet long, as well as I could judge. I could not see its whole shape at once, but only parts of it, for it kept partially appearing and disappearing as it glided along. It could not be a fish, for

no fish would move in that manner; nothing but a serpent would thus advance, contracting and expanding the muscles of its back. Notwithstanding, too, its vast bulk, such was the lubricity of its form and manner of progress, that the water seemed hardly displaced by the movement. No wave accompanied its passage, but merely an endless succession of great bubbles.

Now, for my own part, I had always been incredulous about those old stories of the kraken and sea-serpent; but seeing is believing, and if I could believe my own eyes, here was the veritable "see-orm" in *propriâ personâ*. Hailing my companion to approach, I bid my man row straight for the monster. "I'll have a shot at all events," thought I, as I put a cap on my rifle, which was fortunately in the boat. But, alas! when I next looked towards the whereabout of the monster, he was nowhere to be seen. Quantities of bubbles were still visible, but the glistening coils, which I saw the moment before rolling

along on the surface of the water, had disappeared; and, though we carefully scrutinized every part of the Fjord, we could not catch another glimpse of the creature.

A few days afterwards, as I stood on the shore, to my great delight I saw him again. He was not far out at sea, and was proceeding in the same rolling, coiling manner, though the pace was decidedly improved. This time I fortunately had my telescope with me, which I lost no time in adjusting, being determined to send a description of the beast to the Linnæan, or some other society. On examination, I found that it was half a dozen porpoises following close to each other, whose resplendent backs, as they went up and down, I had mistaken for the connected whole of one tremendous snake. Had it not been for the Dollond in my pocket, there is no doubt that I should have bored my friends to my dying day with the account of my having seen the great sea-serpent described by the episcopal pen of Pontoppidan.

It is said the origin of the Bishop's account of the kraken is this:—In Norway, as in America, the spring floods often bring whole trees down the rivers. These will often lodge in the shallows near the mouth, and become, in fact, snags, the heads of which appear above water, and move about with the force of the stream. The good bishop saw some of these, which at a distance looked like some sea-monster. The peasants told him that they were kraken, the country term for snags. He, misunderstanding them, at once came to the conclusion that he had seen the fabulous beast of Scandinavian legend.

CHAPTER IX.

Old Shörter with his Cap on—A Bridal Party—Interchange of Compliments—English Travellers spoil the Natives—Pursuit of the Reindeer—A Disappointment—A Desolate Spot—The Lady of the Lake—Story of a Stolen Bride—A Weird District—A Midnight Encampment—Ornithological Experiences—Stordal—A Glimpse of Reindeer—Disadvantage of wearing a Glazed Hat—A mysterious Midnight Disturbance—A Reindeer Shooter's Costume—A singular Spot—A Hunter's Refuge—An unexpected Meeting—Peculiar Formation of the Reindeer's Hoof—Timid Women—The Reindeer at home and in the Regent's Park—Norway not a show place—A Dangerous Ferry—Arrival at Sundalsören—Eridsfjord.

One hot afternoon I was sitting, repairing my flies, and every now and then looking anxiously out of the window at old Shörter, a mountain which rose to the height of some four

or five thousand feet on the opposite side of the river. I had special reasons for regarding Shörter so narrowly that day. The river was getting low and stale for want of rain, and the natives assured me that no rain would come unless Shörter put his cap on. A cloud about the bigness of a man's hand had just become perceptible on his brow, and visions of abundance of rain were already filling my imagination, a prognostication which proved true before the shades of evening fell.

At this moment, my attention was diverted by the sounds of music, and the approach of a cavalcade of peasant carts. In the first sat one of either sex, the lady gaily bedizened with ribbons, and the man in his best apparel. In front, with his legs dangling in the air, sat a fiddler, scraping away on his instrument, and exceedingly drunk, as if determined that the proverb of the fiddler should not fail for any fault of his. It was, in fact, a bridal party, who had been wedded that morning, and were paying farewell

visits, previous to taking boat for the bride's new home. As they had never seen an Englishman before, we soon had a visit from the bride and bridegroom to our sanctum. The gentleman, who had a portentous bottle of finkel (corn-brandy) under his arm, offered us a glass of that agreeable fluid; when I, to shew that we appreciated his politeness, placed a silk kerchief round the lady's neck. This made such an impression on her lord and master, that he immediately called for pen and ink, and requested his father-in-law (a peasant, it turned out, up the stream, who had obstinately refused us permission to fish in his pool)—to let us fish whenever we thought proper.

I was the more pleased with this token of gratitude, as the people hereabouts proved anything but obliging. Nay, some of them, probably from jealousy at our lodging with their neighbour, were constantly annoying us by petty acts of hostility. I don't know how it is, but wherever an English traveller

appears, he is sure to spoil the natives. Whether it is that they form exaggerated notions of an Englishman's wealth, or what it is, I am not aware. So in this country, in the remotest valleys, especially if the print of an English foot has been seen there, you will meet with cases of narrow-mindedness and petty exaction which would not disgrace a Shylock of Houndsditch. In spots far away "from the busy world's ignoble strife," beauteous beyond measure, and fair to look upon, which the poet would fancy to be the very home of blessed contentment, and virtuous simplicity, it will be found, "that all but the spirit of man is divine." Laing who is so universal in his praise of the Norwegian character, is not entirely borne out by more recent travellers. Possibly things have changed for the worse since he visited the country, which is twenty years ago.

After enjoying some excellent sport with the rod; as the river was very low, we determined to try our luck among the reindeer,

which abound on the skirts of Sneehätten. Our best route was to the upper end of the lake above us, which penetrated fourteen miles into the mountains. Here were a few huts, where we procured a horse to carry our tent and traps, a boy of eighteen, the son of the owner to lead him, and one Björner, a rein-deer shooter, to find the game. Ascending a break-neck path, we soon gained the desolate plateau of the fjeld, where we encamped for the night. On the second day, we had been surveying the mountains around, in the hope of descrying some of the game, of which we were in search, when a flock of some fifty deer of all sizes, which had apparently been disturbed by some hunter, came suddenly in full career out of the lateral valley, and were making straight for the place where we stood, when seeing us, they turned sharply to the right just out of shot. What a disappoint-ment! After trotting some distance, two or three dusky-hided bucks deliberately turned round and surveyed us, partly in curiosity,

partly perhaps in defiance. To pursue them was useless, as there was not sufficient snow to follow the track, and when once disturbed on these extensive wastes, they will, as our guide assured us, travel for many miles before they stop. There was no help for it, so after cooking some ptarmigan, which we had shot on the lower grounds, we bivouacked for the night.

Next day, moving northward, we came upon a lake blocking up the entrance of a valley; into which valley we had to pass in order to arrive at the likeliest hunting ground. But how to get there? The lake was clearly impassable without a boat; while the rapid torrent which flowed into, and out of it, was too deep to wade, even if we had not been encumbered with our baggage.

Much to my astonishment, the guide commenced hallooing. No creature of earth could possibly dwell in such a barren solitude. So he must be calling the nixies to our aid. True, he might summon spirits

from the vasty deep; but would they answer him? The spot on which we stood was a mass of gray weather-beaten rocks, thickly carpeted with reindeer moss. The whole country right and left of us, and behind, as far as the eye could reach, bore the same features. No trees, no grass, only undulating rocks, rounded seemingly by the action of water, or moving ice; yellow moss everywhere tesselating their surface, with now and then a stunted willow, or dwarf birch, peeping humbly out of some cleft in which it had taken refuge. Was somebody to emerge, Weyland Smith like, from the bowels of the earth, and ferry us over the lake?

While examining with my glass the perpendicular rocks opposite, which flanked the entrance to the valley, I saw a figure emerge from what appeared to be a hole in their side, and move quickly down to the water's edge. A small skiff, more like a wash-tub, was then pushed off from the land, and two paddles soon propelled it towards us. Was

it possible? the new-comer was a woman—verily, a piece of real flesh and blood, in the shape of a yellow-haired lassie, who carolled a monotonous air, as she approached. After a word or two of greeting between Björner and Ragnhild, her blue eyes expanded into very saucers, when she heard we were Englishmen. Being impatient of delay, we recommended haste.

> " Boatman do not tarry,
> And I will give thee a silver pound to row me o'er the ferry."

But so small was the boat, or tub, that it had four journies to make, before we all got over. The horse swam after us, as a matter of course.

Arrived on the other side, I found a shieling of loose stones piled against the rocks; the entrance being some three feet high. Here it was that this girl lived, entirely out of the world, in a spot unapproachable on every side but one. Her

sole companions being her cows and goats, which were driven up here during the summer months, to crop the sweet short grass of the valley beyond. And yet she seemed quite happy and contented. The milking and making cheese occupied all her time, she said; and folks came up to see her once a fortnight.

This solitary life is not so free from danger, after all, if we are to believe the following story of an event which happened not so long before the memory of the oldest inhabitant. A beautiful girl was tending cows up at a sæter, when her betrothed, a young farmer down in the valley, suddenly took it into his head that he would go and see her. An odd sort of presentiment had, in fact, seized him, that she was in peril.

When he arrived at the sæter, a number of small black steeds were standing saddled all about. This made him more anxious than ever. Peeping through a hole in the wall, he saw his sweetheart (Fæstemo) sitting

in bridal garments, with a golden crown on her head, and by her side was a little old red-eyed gentleman, whom he at once knew to be a Hulderman (brownie.) He immediately felt for his pistol, which he had loaded with a silver bullet, and fired it over the girl's head, to break the charm. He then dashed into the house, seized her, and placing her behind him on his nag, rode off, followed by the whole fairy pack. One of them, overtaking him, politely offered him a golden drinking-horn full of liquor. The peasant took the horn, but dashed the contents upon the ground. At last, he arrived at a steep hill close by his home, in which dwelt some brownies. These little people, being jealous of the other little people, called out to the fugitive,

"Ride to the left, poor man!"

He took their advice, and crossed over a field of tall rye, close by. Here his pursuers lost ground. Enraged at being thus baulked, they screamed out,

"The red cock shall crow on thy gaard (house) for this!"

And lo! when he arrived at home, it was all in a flame.

The advice so opportunely given to the peasant by his subterranean friends, reminds me of a street in Augsburg, called "Dort hinab" (down there)—so named, because the devil is said to have appeared to Luther, at a critical moment, when he was flying away for his life from an infuriated rabble, and showed him a way of escape in this direction.

With the pleasantest air imaginable, Ragnhild brought us a large bowl of bunker; *i. e.* milk which has been allowed to mantle over with a thick coating of cream—a dainty dish, I assure you, on the Fjeld; and which, with the aid of birchwood spoons, we speedily dispatched. Bidding good-bye to our kind hostess, who wished us "Lykke paa reise," or God speed, we proceeded on our journey. Mounting the high grounds skirting the valley, we kept on the look out for deer, while the boy

was ordered to proceed with the horse straight up the stream, which watered it. Later in the day, I heard distant halloos, and perceived somebody rushing up the mountain, bare-headed, towards us. It turned out to be the boy. Though eighteen years old, he was evidently alarmed at the dreary nature of the country through which we were passing. Once or twice, I thought his heart was failing him, as I had observed that, every now and then, he gave a hurried look backward, even when we were in company.

"Like one who in a lonely glen doth turn about his head,
For that he thinks a fearful fiend doth close behind him tread."

Having had to cross a tributary stream, he had, in his fright, managed to drop my fowling piece, and his red worsted cap into the water—though he had succeeded in recovering them again. It was this interesting piece of news that he came bawling up to communicate.

That night we encamped on a still loftier plateau, and the ground being too rocky to admit of the tent-pegs being used, large stones were taken out of the brook to keep the canvas properly stretched. Next day, leaving the boy to take care of the horse and our traps, we climbed still higher up the mountain to search for deer in good earnest. As we ascended, we carefully scrutinized the scene around.

The atmosphere was so clear, that objects might be made out at a great distance, but no deer were visible. We were arrived at a spot called Thorbu, the abode of Thor. A capital name for so wild a scene. In spots like this, one might well imagine the hero of Scandinavian mythology keeping court. A vast expanse of fjeld might be seen on three sides of us, the snowy peak of Sneehätten in the distance, and numerous small lakes and streams dotting and scoring the grey waste of rock and moorland. Now and then, that most unearthly croaker, the

red-throated diver, might be seen winging his way to his brood on the pool, which are not yet sufficiently grown to get down to the sea. Side by side with them, you could also descry a family of ducks carelessly floating on the water, heedless of our guns, either because they were unacquainted with their deadly properties, or knew instinctively that we had a higher quarry in view. A snow-bunting would occasionally pipe his cheerful note as he ran along the ledges of rock; while a brood of half-grown grey ptarmigan kept running on in front of us, merely bobbing their heads a little as we threw stones in the vain attempt to make them take wing. If we add to this the occasionally low, melancholy whistle of the golden plover, who stood watching us upon some elevated rock, his black breast making him distinctly visible at a considerable distance—our ornithological experiences were pretty nigh exhausted.

Proceeding onward through snow and

rocks, we at last found ourselves looking down into the head of a frightfully desolate valley, lying just beneath our feet. Stordal is the name. Its extremity was blocked up by a mountain of ice and snow. The side opposite us was totally bare of herbage, and seamed with a thousand gullies, while the side nearest to us, though disfigured with fallen rocks and stones, was clothed in parts with dark green grass.

Suddenly Björner fell flat to the earth; we did the same. Gradually he rose and peered with the tail of his eye over the rocks. "It's all right," he whispered. I crept towards where he lay, but could distinguish nothing but grey stones of various shapes and sizes, dotting the verdure. At last by the aid of my glass, I discovered, at a great distance below, the cause of his spasmodic gesticulations. Nine reindeer were there, five lying down, four still browsing, two or three of which had great branching antlers. They had evidently not perceived us, for,

presently, all nine were stretched upon the sward. Our task was, if possible, to approach them unperceived. The wind, what little there was, blew in our faces; that was all right. For the wind can be the hunter's worst enemy. "The 'rein' has good eyes, and better ears," says the Norwegian, "but his nose, that is a marvel."

The place where we stood must have been nearly two thousand feet above where they lay, and the descent was very precipitous. But the face of the rocks was a good deal broken, affording tolerable cover and foothold, if we were cautious. Grasping my rifle in one hand, and holding on with the other, I, in due time, found myself near the bottom, my companions close alongside. The deer were still lying in the same position, lazily shaking their ears, to keep off the flies. In another five minutes we shall be within shot. The moment was one of intense interest. To circumvent one of these crafty fellows was worth more than

stalking a dozen red-deer. After creeping a little farther on all fours, breathless with excitement and fatigue, we halted for a second, while Björner took another peep. His countenance fell. The bird was flown. Out upon him! and out upon us for not being more cautious.

His old glazed hat had done all the mischief. A gleam of sunshine had settled upon it, and the sleepy deer, who were very wide awake notwithstanding, had caught the alarm at such an unwonted object, and were trotting off apparently quite easily, but in reality at great speed. Around us grew the small pink "reindeer flower," as it is called: I believe the *ranunculus glacialis* of which they are said to be particularly fond; which accounted for their choosing this spot. This and grass are their chief food in the summer: the moss is what the deer subsists on in winter.

The day being far spent, we now trudged back to our tent which we did not reach till late, by no means pleased with our day's

performance. As we were encamped far above the region of trees, there was no danger by our testing the proverb "small sticks kindle a flame, but large ones put it out." All the firing materials at hand were the green dwarf birch-shrubs, which we had to drag up by the roots, and which made a poor substitute for proper fuel, crackling away directly. We should not have been sorry of some of the Canadian *bois de vaches*, *i. e.* cow-dung, at this moment. Subsequently, we found a piece of birch tree, which proved that formerly that tree grew hereabouts. Supper ended, a glass of finkel and a pipe wound up the entertainment, and we were speedily lying on a bed of moss, covered with reindeer skins, and, together with the boy, the hunter, and my pointer, all securely laced in for the night.

I could not have been long asleep, when the lad awoke me with a hideous screech. What could have happened to him? On becoming wide awake, he told us that he

had dreamt he was attacked by the wolves. The illusion must have been complete, as he still kept blubbering, when he regained his senses. In due time, the commotion subsided, but our slumbers were destined to be broken a second time. A stout pull at the tent rope aroused myself and my companion, the Englishman, at the same moment. What on earth was it? the horse? but no, it could not be he, for he was tethered at some distance. A bear perhaps, who had smelt us out, and in ursine fashion was, fe, fi, fo, fumming for our blood. Awkward, but was I to be alarmed, I who had bearded sea-serpents, *qui siccis oculis monstra natantia vidit?*

Or was it a glutton? a formidable beast, of which we had seen traces during the day. The wolf or the lynx were anything but strangers in these diggings—anyhow, it would never do to be eaten alive in our beds, so up I started.

Gently lifting up a flap of the tent, I assayed to look out into the night, and by

the pale glimpses of the stars (it was September, and they are visible then) to make out the intruder. A cold clammy substance, evidently alive, encountered my palm. For a moment I was horrified, but the next I roared with laughter. It was the honest, or rather dishonest nose of my old pointer. Being on half rations, he was unable to resist the cravings of hunger any longer, and choosing his time when we were all asleep, he had sneaked out, and dragged down from the tent-rope a bunch of ptarmigan thereto suspended. One of them he had swallowed, plumage and all, and a second was nearly demolished. Poor fellow! he was chastised for it; but after all, perhaps, I was in the wrong.

Another day, we took an opposite direction, but toiled all day without meeting with deer. A reindeer shooter from Romsdal crossed our path, marching up hill at a tremendous pace. His get-up was peculiar, very unlike that of King Cliquot, when he goes out pig-

shooting on St. Hubert's day, as described by the Court Journal of Berlin. Dark knee breeches, his coat a grey blanket, with a hole in it, through which his head protruded, surmounted by a conical cap of brown felt, minus a brim; his rifle was a pristine instrument; the barrel very long, and the stock little better than a thick stick. And yet I learnt that with such weapons the peasants often bring down a deer. The fashion is always to rest the rifle on a rock when firing.

During our walk we stumbled upon a most singular spot. In a deep basin, the sides of which were sloping fields of snow, gradually turning into glaciers and icebergs, as they approached the water, lay a small lake. In some places the ice had been hollowed by the action of the sun or the water, into arching grottos, thick with pendant stalactites, which rivalled in depth of blue the glacier of Rosenlaui in Switzerland, contrasting forcibly with the frosted silver of the snow. A flock of grey ptarmigan had

selected this spot for their morning promenade. But as it is well known, these birds, which are identical with those of Scotland, are of eccentric habits, preferring the topmost grey rocks to the birchwood of the upper valleys, which are tenanted by their brown brethren; a species unknown in Great Britain.

Returning home we found that the boy had permitted the horse to stray out of sight. There was nothing for it but to send Björner in pursuit, weary though he was. He did not return till next day, having found the horse ten miles off on his road home; although his fore-legs were hoppled. We determined to make one more search for the deer; but, although we came upon the fresh trail of a large flock, and saw recently bitten stems of the reindeer-flower, we failed to discover the animals themselves. This day we saw a bothy of stones, six feet square, and two feet high, which our guide informed us was the occasional refuge of hunters. When these men shoot a deer, they place it in a

câche of the largest stones they can move, to preserve it from the gluttons and eagles, and returning to the valley bring a horse to fetch away the carcase. Evening was closing around us, and still no deer, so we turned our face homeward.

Just as we had topped a brow, and I had laid down my rifle to have a drink of snow-water, a low whistle from Björner made me look up. Unawares, we had come close upon some twenty deer, who scuttled off with such velocity, that shooting them was out of the question. A precious bungle indeed! I consoled myself by watching the movements of these magnificent creatures. Half of them dashed into a gorge, and were out of sight in an instant. The others, although the ground was a very Stonehenge of boulders, never relaxed their spanking trot. At every bound, I thought they must have a smash, but nothing of the kind occurred.

The cloven foot of the rein-deer, expanding as it lights, takes firm hold of the smoothest

rock. It is this conformation of the foot which causes the clatter of deer in motion.

Presently they were on the banks of a wide torrent—how wide, I fear to say—the leader, a fine antlered buck, took it in his stride—a prodigious jump. The next eight were females, who trotted through the stream; while the one who brought up the rear, and also rejoiced in horns of a great breadth, gallantly jumped it like the first.

When we got home, two women were, to our no small surprise, standing on a rock, a bow-shot from the tent. After a good deal of beckoning on our part, they took courage, and descended. They had seen us the day before, but not liking our appearance in that desolate region—possibly, they took us for gipsies, who have an infamous reputation in this country—they feared to come near; they lived at a sæter or chalet, some miles off, and were looking after some strayed cattle. They expected, they said, a man and horse, with provisions the next morning, from Sundal,

which was about twenty miles off, and they had no doubt he would engage to convey our luggage down thither.

This was grateful intelligence, as our stock of coffee and schnaps was all but gone, and we had divided our last lump of sugar that morning. We determined, therefore, to dismiss the boy and horse at once. Very glad he was at the thoughts of getting home, but at the same time, not a little terrified lest he should lose his way, and become a prey to the wolves. But his nerves became somewhat composed, on our telling him that he had only to follow his horse, whose sagacity was sure to lead him right, and make up for the biped's stupidity.

Early in the morning, the peasant arrived, sure enough, with a little chestnut mare which he said would soon get down home, as her foal was shut up at home. So fastening our tent, &c. upon the horse's back, by the aid of two wicker net-work contrivances, which served as a pack-saddle, we bid adieu to the

Fjeld. We had shot no deer, it is true, and had had very hard work of it, but I shall always recal the hours so spent with delight.

"*Olim et hæc meminisse juvabit,*" especially whilst drinking unexceptionable common-room port imported by the society; a fluid supposed to be alluded to by Juvenal in his "*pressam* bellis *socialibus uvam.*"

The mere sight of a pack of reindeer bounding full tilt over their native Fjelds, in all the true majesty of "the antlered monarch of the waste," very different from the dwarfish hay-fed unfortunates, that pine in the Regent's Park—is a thing to be remembered.

And then the exhilaration caused by the mountain air—champagne without its consequent reaction on the system, and attended by none of that oppressive feeling in the head, and parching and peeling of the lips, that a climb in Switzerland produces; and then, Norway is not like Switzerland, a show-place.

John Bull may see it without being led about by the nose, as elsewhere. You may explore the wonders of its landscape, without being pestered by a crowd of touting mendicants, with proffers of unneeded assistance. You may "muse o'er flood and fell" with nobody to interfere with the sanctity of your emotions: revel in the din of the water-fall, without the squeaking accompaniment, "this way if you please, sir; I make no charge, sir — leave it to you, sir: a little lower down, sir—" You may hold sweet converse with the echoes, without being deafened by some odious horn-blower, puffing out his cheeks like Æolus in a fit. Thank goodness, the peasants here, with few exceptions, don't know what fine scenery means, "Is the scenery on that road, romantic?" I once asked of an educated Norwegian. He did not understand me. "Is that a beautiful road?" "Oh, very!" he replied; "it is not very hilly, and it was mended throughout, a short time ago." In fact, nations do not begin to

appreciate scenery, till they are far advanced in civilization. As late as 1730, Captain Birt, an intelligent traveller, said of the hills of Invernesshire, that there was an unpleasant contrast between them and the beauties of Richmond Hill. Macaulay, who mentions this, also quotes the case of Goldsmith, who declared that he greatly preferred the charming scenery about Leyden, to that of the Highlands.

At the same time, be it observed, that unless you are sound in wind and limb, and inured to roughing it, life in a tent upon the Norwegian fjeld is not to be recommended. Break-neck work it was descending, along water-courses, up rocks, down rocks, over dizzy bridges made of birch-trunks, thrown loosely across seething abysses. Nothing, however, proved an obstacle to the little chestnut mare, "whose foal was shut up at home." She climbed like a cat. Some places were such, that I held her back by the tail while Hans, her master, broke her fall by clutching at the reins. At length, we found ourselves

at the head of a narrow valley, where we encamped for the night.

The next day we came upon a lake, which entirely filled the gorge, at least, so I thought; but the mare being relieved from her burden, managed to clamber forward among the rocks by the water's edge. As for ourselves and baggage, a peasant, living in a lone hut near, undertook to ferry them over in a boat, which lay concealed in the thicket. The lake might have been a mile long; but the crazy boat leaked so frightfully, that it was a question whether we should get over; with true Norwegian laziness, no attempt had been made to stop up the gaps, and the water was soon level with the thofts on which our property was placed. His apology was that it was a very long time since the boat had been used. Not much traffic on this line! The water was many yards deep, but as clear as crystal: still I had no wish to go down in it. By great good luck we reached the opposite shore, just in time.

Lower down we encountered another lake, where we again took boat; this time tolerably water-tight. The horse scrambled along as before, which he was able to do, except in one spot, where, all vestige of a track ending, he had to swim a few hundred yards under a perpendicular wall of the rock; following the boat with the docility of a dog. At length, we reached Sundalsoren, and were not a little glad to put our heads under the roof of the merchant residing there.

The next day we sailed down the Fjord, and crossed a narrow isthmus at Eidsören. On the road-side stands a gibbet, where a man was hung in chains, for murdering his sweetheart, whom he visited at a sæter. Beyond this, we found ourselves again on a branch of the Lange Fjord, where we took boat and soon arrived at Eridsfjord.

CHAPTER X.

The Harbour at Christiansund—Desolate character of the surrounding Country—The Valley of Sundal—Its Morality—Sickness in the Change-House at Jüra—Medical Destitution of the Mountaineers—Cure for an Adder's Bite—An Accident which happened to the Author at Ostersund—Robbery of a Golden Eagle's Nest—Desperate Leap taken by a Wolf—Embarrassing Politeness—Avalanches and their Effects.

THE harbour of Christiansund is not a little singular. It is in the shape of a circle, perhaps a third of a mile in diameter, with four narrow outlets, almost opposite to each other; so that the town is divided into four distinct parts. With such excellent shelter for vessels, and its proximity to the open sea, it need not be matter of surprise that its

commerce is fast increasing. As one looks at the many prim-looking houses, painted red or yellow, and roofed with red tiles; and the warehouses of the same colour, projecting over the water on piles, in true Norsk fashion; boats plying to and fro from the various islands to the steamer—all evidence of a considerable population—one is tempted to enquire how the people are fed. All around is little more than bare rocks. Scarcely a vestige of cultivation to be seen, and hardly a dozen apologies for trees. Like "they of Tyre and Sidon" in olden times, the inhabitants of Christiansund, whose chief pursuit is commerce, are no doubt, "nourished" from a distance. Much corn, in fact, is imported from Denmark, but the town is also supplied from the fertile district east of this. In fact, straight in land from hence there are two or three valleys, between which and the town, a regular communication is kept up on the usual highways of the country—the Fjords.

Of one of these valleys, that of Sundal, mentioned above, in which I once spent some time, it will be as well to say something. The traveller across the Dovrefjeld to Trondjem will recollect, that as he approaches Kongswold, he finds himself on the banks of a furious torrent. This is the infant Driva, which accompanies him all the way to Oune. Here you part company; the river, which has gradually increased in volume, making a sudden turn to the left, and driving tumultuously along—hence its name of Driva—for some thirty miles in the bottom of a deep cleft, buried in masses of dark pine-forest, till it approaches Jüra, where the gorge widens into the fine valley of Sundal.

Formerly this valley did not stand in high repute for morality. Of the children born in it from 1826 to 1836, nearly one in three were illegitimate. Since then, however, matters have mended; owing probably to the zeal and diligence of my excellent friend

Pastor G., the clergyman of the district. In genuine kindness, honesty, and intelligence, I found the natives equal, if not superior to any people that I have met in the country.

The good folks of the lone change-house at Jüra were in much tribulation on our arrival, in consequence of the indisposition of the young peasant, to whom their second daughter was betrothed. As Englishmen are regarded by the simple natives, as not only the richest, but also the cleverest people on the face of the earth, I was immediately called into the sick room. The girl anxiously watched my countenance, as though to read there what I thought of the patient. It was clearly a case for a black dose. On my departure I left several pills to be taken at intervals by the invalid. Subsequently, I learned that he swallowed the whole of them at once, more than a dose for a dog. He survived the shock! Tough fellows these Arctic people! And when I again passed that way, was married to Miss Jüra.

Unlike the the victims of over-civilization, these hardy mountaineers seldom require the aid of a doctor. And as may be expected, the demand for medicine-men being so little, the supply is proportionably small. At confinements, of course, no practitioner is in attendance. In case of accidents, the people are reduced to sad straits. A case of this kind occurs to my mind. A young girl at Eridsfjord had been bitten by an adder. What was to be done? The Englishman must be able to cure her. So off the father set for our dwelling. The only approach to a remedy in our possession, was some *hair-oil*, which being applied to the bite, and likewise taken interiorly, cured the patient.

On another occasion, arriving at a station in a very wild part of the province of Jemteland, on the great road from Trondjem to the Gulf of Bothnia, I found the young hostess in deep distress. Leading me into the house, with pale and agitated looks, she pointed to her husband, a fine handsome young fellow

who lay in bed looking very ill. A day or two before he had nearly taken his heel off with an axe, and there was no doctor within one hundred and twenty miles. His pulse being quiet, and the symptoms generally favourable, I left him with a small supply of medicine, and directions to keep the limb quiet. The poor people seemed truly grateful for this little assistance, and the wife at all events looked less alarmed and woe-begone. English travellers in Norway will always do well to carry a little medicine with them, as it may not only be of use to the natives, but to themselves. Some Englishmen complain of boils, brought on by the meagreness of the diet, while others find the least scratch difficult to heal.

Talking of Sweden, an absurd accident once occurred to me, which at first sight seemed to require the aid of an Æsculapius. Arriving at Ostersund, a small town most picturesquely situated at the head of the chain of lakes lying to the west of Sundswall, I

found the inn full, in consequence of a ball about to be held there. A posse of gentlemen and ladies elegantly dressed, many of them very good looking, were already assembled in the large room. I immediately received an invitation to join the party, which I of course accepted; and a merchant offering me accommodation in his house, I retired thither to complete my toilette. Anxious to appear among the Swedish belles to the best advantage, I was not long in fishing up from my trunk, a dress suit, with patent leathers, white kids, &c.

Being very dusty, I proceeded to wash, when in a moment I experienced a most burning sensation in my face, as if some vitriol had been thrown over it. For some hours, I was in a state of great agony. Subsequently, it was discovered that the servant girl, by mistake, had brought me water strongly saturated with lie for scouring. It was some consolation, however, to hear that the ladies of Ostersund were much concerned

at my accident. The state of my physiognomy, next day, was such that I was glad to escape observation, and saw nothing more of the inhabitants.

But to return to Sundalen. Mine host, the eponymous Jüra, is a sportsman in his way. In the cliffs, across the river, golden eagles have built their nest for many years. Not the same pair as will shortly appear. Choosing his time, when the young ones are hatched, he descends to a perilous point overhanging the eyrie, and shoots the mother upon her nest. Being then let down by a rope, he secures her body together with the brood. Nor is he unrewarded for his risk and trouble: as he receives three dollars from the Voged of the district, not exactly per head, but for every pair of claws he produces.

Surely this is a more sensible arrangement than that of those numbskull churchwardens of —— who pay for sparrows' heads out of the church-rates. Although a pair of them,

while feeding their young, destroy, according to Buffon, four thousand caterpillars weekly.

This valley is quite a stronghold for wild animals. Not long since, Jüra trapped a lynx (gaupe) not far from the station. A winter or two ago, he, together with a band of peasants in snow shoes, pursued a wolf to the edge of the precipice overhanging the road, just below the house. "Graa-been," *i. e.* grey-legs, as the Norwegians call him—the Finns call him "Laajalg," *i. e.* broad-foot.—This periphrasis is supposed to be due to the superstition that wolves are connected with evil spirits. Hence the disinclination to pronounce their name. Being hard pressed, he made a jump for it. The snow being deep, he was not killed by the desperate leap, but only stunned. Before he could recover, the peasants stationed in the road below effectually finished him. As I stopped to converse with a peasant, another came up with the skins of three wolves for sale, which he had

recently taken from a hole in the absence of mamma.

The Norwegians would, according to our notions, be considered to display an extraordinary lack of modesty. The best room in a house is called Bo. Here is the state-bed, or beds, for strangers. In some farm-houses, it is considered a mark of politeness for the family to stay in this room, till the guests turn in to bed. My Quaker friend was once staying, together with some Englishmen, at a farm-house. At night, being aware of the above custom, he betook himself to repose. The other Englishmen, ignorant of the fashion, were too modest to follow his example in the presence of the lady of the house, and kept the good people up till a very late or early hour; politeness forbidding the latter to leave the room before the strangers were in bed. Again, girls will enter a gentleman's bed-room without any previous notice, and, no matter what the state of his toilette, they are not in the least disconcerted. The true

cause of this, I am convinced, is rather to be sought in their unsophistication, than in any absence of modesty. Thus, while bathing in a deep pool near Jüra, I found, to my consternation, that a number of peasant girls were staring at me from an adjoining thicket. The case of Actæon and Diana reversed. Swimming was, no doubt, a marvel to them, and they had come thither to behold the strange phenomenon.

A worse thing befell an old Norwegian traveller, a friend of mine. One hot day, he had retired to bathe in a large tub, which he had caused to be placed by a spring, some distance from his abode. While disporting himself in the cooling bath, he was horror-stricken to find himself surrounded by a quantity of peasants of both sexes. Escape was impossible; so he was forced, after the manner of Diogenes, to stick to his tub, till the bystanders departed.

But after all, this is nothing, compared with what happened to a friend of mine in

France. While strolling on the beach near St. Malo, he suddenly came upon some females bathing. Instead of flying to the ocean, like the spirit in Comus, they rushed towards him, like so many infuriated Bacchanals, screaming, " Nous vous avez vu?" " Nous vous avez vu?"

The inhabitants of this valley, have, at times, another and more fearful enemy to contend with than wild animals: I mean the avalanches, which descend from the vast heights on either side of the stream. Below Jüra, there is a ford, upon which there is a ferry; but the ferryman's house is a considerable distance off. On inquiry, I found that avalanches are unpleasantly fond of coming down just by the ford, which makes it impossible for any one to live near. The spire of Sundalsören church, at the bottom of the valley, is quite out of the perpendicular. This was caused by the puff of an avalanche.

Near Snöva may be seen the ruins of a

house, which was the scene of a tragic accident some years ago. One evening, early in the spring, the occupiers of this abode, a peasant and his family, one of them a baby in arms, were just retiring to rest: together with a workman that happened to be lodging there at the time. Suddenly, a rushing sound was heard, drawing nearer and nearer, and waxing louder and louder. "There comes the lavine," exclaimed the father of the family, "God have mercy upon us!" That was all he had time to say, when the mighty mass was upon them, overwhelming house and all in its passage. Not long after, a wayfarer passed by, and missing the house, he immediately gave the alarm. After a little search, the arm of a man was found protruding out of the snow. It was the workman, who was dug out alive, and told the tale of the disaster. Some distance off, in the surface of the snow, the baby was also discovered quite unscathed. No digging ever discovered the remainder of the family. They

were, in all probability, borne several hundred yards onward into the bed of the frozen river, and carried off by the thaw in the spring.

CHAPTER XI.

Hoas a good Fishing Station—Amazement of the Natives at first witnessing Fly-Fishing—The English Nobleman—Ole, a picturesque Norwegian—Family Wardrobes—Characteristics of Scandinavian Pigs—Pursuit of a Bear—A Fieldfare's Defence of its Nest—Successful Trout-Fishing—Pastor G.'s Chalet—A Rough but Good Supper—Infamous way in which the Norwegian Peasants destroy the Black Cock.

SALMON are to be caught all the way up to Jüra. But the great draw-back on Sundals Elv is, that when the water is high, it becomes discoloured from a mud-bank near Snöva. The best station for fishing is Hoas. When I first fished there, some three years ago, the people watched my operations with all the simple curiosity of South Sea

Islanders. And when they saw me hook, and battle with, and ultimately land a twenty pound salmon, they were in a perfect ecstacy of amazement. Looking first at my slender rod, then at the fly, and then at the prize, and lastly at the fisherman, they burst into shouts of laughter.

But alas! *nous avons changé cela.* A real live English nobleman, Lord L. who has wealth enough to procure the best river in Great Britain, has found out this sequestered spot, and must needs take the fishing, and raise the prices. Let Lord L. permit me to assure him that this is quite a mistake. He ought to have been content with home, and left sportsmen of less princely means, to whom Scotch fishing, from its price, is quite inaccessible, to the rough doings in Norway. As the stoned frog said to the school-boys in the fable. "This may be sport to you, but it is death to us."

Ole, surnamed Hoas, after the abode of his forefathers, was, when I knew him, one

of the best fellows imaginable. Kindly in disposition, and withal of the highest principles, he scorned anything like peculation, or tricks of any sort, and, as he received what salmon we did not eat, he would not have a farthing for the fishing. He was a tall spindle-shanked fellow, with great round iron spectacles bridging his nose, and a red night-cap surmounting his streaming grey locks. The shaft of my cariole having been smashed, Ole undertook to repair it, which he did as well as any town workman. Perceiving his beard to be in a somewhat ragged condition, I considered he would be none the worse for the present of an English razor. Such was his joy at becoming the possessor of so precious an instrument—shaving-knife he called it—that nothing would induce him to accept any pay for the repair of the cariole.

Unlike most of his Bonder brethren, whose farms are mortgaged in the Bank of Trondjem, Ole is reputed to be worth some money. Still his manner of living is no better than

those generally in use. His fare is gröd *i. e.*, porridge, milk, and flad bröd; *i. e.*, barley cake. As my own stock of provisions was not brilliant, I went, under the auspices of his better half, a good-looking woman, perhaps twenty years his junior, to inspect the larder. It was situated at the top of the house, and was lighted by two windows, neither of which would open. The only provisions to be found in it, were some dried mutton hams and a few eggs, which the lady pointed to with an air of triumph. They were the produce of a solitary pair of fowls, the only ones I had seen in the valley.

The chief purpose to which this room served was that of family wardrobe. All round it were huge chests, on which were painted the names of herself and husband, and filled with clothing and a miscellaneous assortment of household goods, while, on pegs along the walls were hung male and female attire of every description. Next day Ole informed me that a calf had been killed

some miles off, of which he had procured a part; and this, with the aid of salmon, which was to be had in abundance, made me quite easy on the score of provender. The supply of eggs, likewise, was kept up without intermission, so that I began to look upon the aforesaid pair of barn-doors as not inferior to a pair of Cochins in productiveness. But this was a mistake of mine, as I afterwards discovered. For, a short time subsequently, happening to go to Oxendal, a place on the fjord about fourteen miles off, and asking if any eggs were to be had, the good people told me that all theirs had been dispatched to Hoas for the use of an Englishman, who was a wonderful consumer of that article. I need not observe that the Englishman in question was myself. They offered me, however, some very tolerable bacon, which by the bye, is always eaten raw in this country. It was really much more palatable than I could have expected, considering what the pigs of Scandinavia subsist on. Verbum sap!

These creatures are excessively savage, and as well as the small cows, attack strange dogs with the utmost ferocity. A sheep-dog they do not seem to mind, but anything like a sporting dog is their abomination. Gaunt and hungry-looking, with long legs, and arching back, surmounted by a *chevaux-de-frise* of the bristles of commerce, they form an unpleasant contrast to the sleek dumpy breeds of England, and remind one rather of the swinish multitudes described by the Old Man of the Brunnens.

One day, an alarm was given that a bear was stealing along under the mountain side just above Hoas. A party of gunners soon turned out in pursuit, but Bruin, whose pace had before been very leisurely, no sooner got wind of it, than he set off with such alacrity, that he was speedily lost to view.

While sauntering in the dwarf birch woods near the house, I came upon a number of fieldfares' nests. One of them being only

just over my head, I climbed upon a bough to ascertain its contents. No sooner had I done this, than the parent bird, who was perched on a neighbouring tree, set up a terrible chattering; and just as I put my hand into the nest, and felt four young birds nearly fledged, she darted down as though she would have flown right into my eyes. But instead of this, she fired an unsavoury shot into my face, and then suddenly wheeling upwards, settled in a tree beyond. In another moment, the attack was repeated; and, in fact, she returned to the charge four times successively. By the time I had descended from the tree, the state of my outer man was far from agreeable, and caused no small merriment on my return to the house. As, however, I am somewhat of a naturalist, the discovery of this singular fact in physical science made me quite forget that I had been the victim of it.

My salmon fishing, at first, was pretty

successful, but the river beginning to rise, the water became too thick for the purpose. So, having hired the services of one Michel, a giant in stature, I took my trout-rod and rifle, and crossing the stream, ascended a narrow valley that led to the fjeld. In due time, we reached a solitary lake. Into the upper end of this flowed a pellucid stream, through a groove of rock, the sides of which might have been some thirty feet high, and quite perpendicular. Though the water was a great many feet deep, it was so clear that I could see large trout peeping out of their holes below. But they were so wary, that neither minnow or fly availed to allure them out of their hiding places. So there was nothing for it but to try a worm, which I procured with no small difficulty. No sooner had this bait reached the required depth, than I had hold of a fine fellow, which weighed upwards of three pounds. Another somewhat bigger was speedily hauled up, and then two or three smaller

ones. After this, the sport ceased, the other fish having taken the alarm.

Having secured our booty, which afforded us a prospect of a good supper, we proceeded on our way, in quest of Pastor G——'s chalet, where I was to obtain quarters for the night. At length, after toiling some distance further up the glen, Michel pointed to an object, which looked to me like an isolated block of grey rock, its top covered with turf, but which he persisted in saying was the sæter in question. And so it turned out to be. Marite, a plump, good-natured damsel, the presiding deity of this shrine, opening the door, bid us welcome. By dint of ducking my head, and contracting my limbs after the manner of harlequin, I succeeded in getting through the orifice, miscalled door, and found myself inside the dwelling. It was built of loose slates, and divided into two parts, each about seven feet square, and as many high. The inner apartment served as the dairy. Here was

a goodly store of cheeses and salt butter, the produce of Marite's industry; while on shelves along the wall stood an array of well-scoured birchen vessels, full of aromatic milk, and mantled over with cream of various degrees of thickness. The chimney, which also served the purpose of window, took up about a third of the lodging-room, while the other part was chiefly occupied by the bed.

The neat-handed maiden soon lit a fire, and cooked my trout in the iron pot, the only culinary utensil of which the establishment could boast. It is true, there were no plates and no forks; but a piece of birch-bark served me for the one, and I did without the other. After a long chat with Marite, who was very inquisitive, but very modest and well-behaved; Michel the while squatting on a tub in the corner, and munching his evening meal, the girl retired to sleep with Ingeborga, in an adjoining sæter. These two girls are the sole inhabitants of

this lonely spot. Michel, I believe, bestowed himself in a cow-shed for the night. As for myself, first slipping my trousers into a large hole in the wall, close by my ear, to keep out the night air, I was soon fast asleep under the sheep-skins.

A rein-deer had been seen close to the sæters the day before, but though we walked about the mountains for a couple of days, no deer could be found. Michel, in fact, though mighty in size and strength, had nothing of the sportsman in his composition. Very few Norwegians have. Indeed, their former love of the chase, and of bodily exercises, seems to have passed over to England, and left them in the same way as their Jarl; both title and thing, although originating in Scandinavia, is now only to be found in Britain. When they shoot, it is for the pot.

The infamous way in which the peasant destroys the capercailzie and blackcock, by stealing on them at pairing time, when they

are blind to his approach, is well known. Whatever Murray may say, the Norwegian never thinks of shooting flying. In winter-time, he snares the ptarmigan by hundreds when they approach the sea. The Norsk gentry are no better. On more than one occasion, I have been ridiculed by them for refusing to shoot ptarmigan sitting. To give the poor bird a chance for its life, is a thing which these people have never dreamt of in their philosophy.

CHAPTER XII.

Pastor G.'s Hospitality—His Literary Tastes—A Clever Smith—A Norwegian Clergyman's Work—A famous Trout Lake—Fight between Two Wolves and a Newfoundland Dog—Methods practised in Norway for Catching and Destroying Wolves—Stories about Bears—The Morals of the People improved by the removal of Incentives to Drink—Mr. Laing's Accounts considered—Difficulty of obtaining Brandy—An exhilarated Clergyman—His Anathema on Puseyites—The Rite of Confirmation in Norway—Tiedemann's Picture of a Catechising in the Church of Hitterdal—A Confirmation in Sundalsören Church—Wood Ptarmigan Shooting—Stangvig Fjord—An unsuccessful Fishing Excursion—Characteristics of Norwegian Salmon—Salmon in the Rivers flowing into the Gulf of Bothnia.

ON my return to Hoas, I received a visit from Pastor G——, who invited me to come and stay with him at Sundalsören; and a most hospitable reception I met with

from himself and his excellent lady. At meals, I must, perforce, take the seat of honour at the top of the board. This I submitted to. But when the mistress of the house commenced handing round the dishes, my English notions made it difficult to persuade me not to relieve her from the task. The pastor, however, explaining that this was the custom of the country, I was contented to let matters take their course. Dinner over, every one seizes his or her chair, and places it against the wall with the utmost rapidity. You then rush forward to the hostess, and say, "Tak for mad," (thanks for the meal,) and then everybody says to everybody else, "Vel bekomme," (may it do you good.)

Pastor G. was a person of literary tastes. He spoke and read German. He was evidently beloved by his flock: one of the parishioners who had lost his all by a fire a short time before, told me that G. had been quite a father to him.

This man's brother, Eva, the little Schmid, as he was called, was reputed to be a very clever smith, and I found that his talents had not been exaggerated. Having lost my vice for fly-making, I proposed to him to construct me another, describing what I wanted. In a few days, he with a modest air brought me the result of his labours. It was quite a master-piece of art, considering the imperfect tools at his command. Nay, I have since been informed by a practical man in England, that it could not have been made better by a first-rate London mechanic. This is only a fresh proof to me of the remark, that there is an excellent raw material in this country to work upon. I was glad to hear, on a subsequent visit to the valley, that the little Schmid was looking up in the world. The widow of a well-to-do bonder (peasant) had cast an eye of affection on the modest little fellow, and he was now her husband, and owner of a good gaard with three horses and several cows.

Pastor G. had four churches to serve, two of them across the fjord. The hardship of crossing the water in all weathers, with the utter want of society, seemed to be affecting his health; and shortly afterwards he changed his cure for one of less emolument in the South.

Over the river, near Sundalsören, at the entrance of Lilledal, is a small lake noted for trout; but which, as I was informed, no bait would take. This account did not deter me from trying my luck. There was an old boat on the water, but it was full of holes, and part of one of the oars was gone. Stopping the leaks with clouts, I was soon launched in the frail craft, and labouring over the water, dragging an artificial gudgeon after me. A dozen large trout, some above two pounds, the fattest and reddest I ever saw, was the result of my fishing. The worthy pastor, who was himself the possessor of a fishing rod, and some strange looking flies purchased at Trondjem, had never caught a fish, so that he

was quite beside himself with amazement at my success.

Salmon trout enter the river in great quantities about the end of August. I have taken many of them with fly. A companion of mine, fishing near the mouth, hooked what proved to be a common trout. It weighed nine pounds. According to the natives, these fish come down in the autumn from the Fjeld lakes for a little sea bathing.

All the dormant sportsman in Pastor G. became aroused by what I had done, and it was his great delight to accompany me out fishing. Some of his stories of wild beasts are worth recording, as showing the wildness of the country in which his lot was cast.

One winter's morning, his servant girl heard an unusual noise outside the house-door, and, opening it, saw two wolves in hot contest with a fine Newfoundland dog belonging to the priest. One of the beasts had fastened on the dog's paw, while the other was working hard at his throat. A dainty morsel, indeed,

he would have proved, had they succeeded in their vile intent, it being well known that wolves prefer a little dog-flesh to almost any other viand. Fortunately, however, a broad brass collar had stood between the dog and the death-throttle. On seeing the girl, the marauders made off. They must have been severely punished, as there were traces of blood along the snow for some distance.

It is not uncommon, the priest tells me, to tie a pig to a sledge in winter and drive up the valley. The wolves, attracted by the pig's squeaking, which the peasants keep up by sundry little methods of torture, follow in the wake of the vehicle, and are thus shot down. Perhaps the more certain way of taking these animals is that pursued in Finland—viz., by sticking a pole upright in a pit with a sheep fixed on the top of it. The pit being concealed by a light covering of boughs, the wolf springing forward at the bait, falls in, and is taken.

Mistakes, however, will sometimes occur

in Finland as well as in England. And the right person does not always get into the right place. At all events, this hole was not the place for an old woman: who lost her road in the forest, and, as ill luck would have it, fell into it. She had not been there long, when a wolf tumbled in likewise. Though pressed by hunger, his natural cowardice prevailed, or, mayhap, he did not fancy so tough a morsel. Be this as it may, he suffered the old lady to remain unmolested, much to her relief, no doubt. And there they sat staring at each other from opposite corners of the pit-fall; until presently the peasant, who had set the trap, approached, and seeing the state of affairs, shot the wolf and liberated the captive princess.

Not long ago, some of the priest's parishioners traced a bear to his hole in Oxendal; but the difficulty was to draw him. No amount of noise availed: while an attempt to smoke the beast out was equally unsuccessful. In this dilemma, one fellow, more daring

than the rest, crept right into the den, and firing into Bruin's countenance, ended his life.

Gordon Cumming tells a story, how he succeeded in frightening away a whole pack of ghastly wild dogs, by a little quiet expostulation, thus asserting the pre-eminence, over the brutes, of the human voice divine. Bears, as the priest told me, are at times scared in a similar way.

A little urchin was tending cattle out near the fjord, when a bear suddenly rushed upon one of them. This beast's savagery, when a cow is his victim, is well known. The tiny lad, who had never seen such a monster before, was not in the least frightened; but advancing with his whip, gave the brute a smart lash across the nose, telling him, "Naar du will ikke gaa jeg skall stinge derm." "If you are not off about your business I will flog you." Disconcerted by this earnest address, and withal plagued by the dog in the rear—bears are very susceptible in these quar-

ters—the animal actually took to flight, without injuring the cattle.

Perhaps one other cause, besides the exemplary character of the priest, has led to an improvement of the manners and morals of the people of this valley: I mean the removal of the incentives to drink. In Mr. Laing's time, every peasant might manufacture his own potato-brandy. Distillation was free. Few cases of drunkenness seem to have come under his notice. At all events, he does not record his impression, that the population were addicted to drunkenness from the facility they possessed of procuring spirits. On the contrary, "the cheap access to liquor," he observes, "appears to have had no bad effect on the labouring population of Norway." He even hints that the more limited opportunities of getting liquor, and the fiscal restrictions on its distillation and sale, have engendered that diseased craving for it which prevails among the working classes of Great Britain.

But facts are better than theories. Since Mr. Laing's visit to the country, the vice of drunkenness became so flagrant, that it was considered necessary by the Storthing, to place very stringent restrictions on the sale and manufacture of spirits. A sort of Maine liquor-law has come into operation in Norway. Private stills are forbidden, and spirits are only allowed to be sold in the towns. Public morals have, no doubt, gained in consequence; though the traveller at times is put to inconvenience. The small stock of spirits which I had brought with me from Christiania, being consumed, I endeavoured to have it replenished at Sundalsören; but learnt that nothing of the kind could be procured nearer than Christiansund. This was very inconvenient; for the labour and exposure to which a traveller or sportsman is subject in this country, make the stimulus of a little mountain dew very acceptable to the wearied frame.

In this strait, I heard talk of a recent

wedding in the neighbourhood. I took the hint at once, and went, with an empty bottle, to the house of feasting. Drawing the peasant on one side, I made him understand the object of my errand. At first, the answer was, that it was quite impossible. It was true, the small cask which he had purchased at the town, was not empty; but then, to sell it was "imod loven" (contrary to law). And then, the neighbours would hear of it, and he would be fined, I don't know how many dollars. The colloquy ended, by my passing certain Norwegian coins into my friend's hand, and returning with a bottle full of brandy in my pocket. Generally, I have a great respect for the revenue laws, but it really was a matter of necessity on this occasion.

In Sweden, in spite of the energetic endeavours of the king, very little has been done towards arresting the prevalent habit of drunkenness, and thus preventing the numerous crimes that spring from it.

Schnaps is drunk at all hours by the Swedes. A striking evidence of this habit once occurred to myself. When on the point of starting, at 7 o'clock one morning, from a change-house in Sweden, where I had passed the night, I was asked by the landlord to come into another room, and take a farewell glass with the clergyman of the parish. I at once accepted the polite offer. His reverence, who spoke English, was altogether a very intelligent person. It appeared that he had presided at a farewell supper, given by the people of the neighbourhood to a government functionary, and the revels had been prolonged till morning. As might be expected, he was somewhat exhilarated already. Gustavus Adolphus, and the glorious Protestant faith, were his strong points.

"England, too, was a Protestant country. But, alas! those —— Puseyites," he exclaimed, striking the table emphatically with his fist, "they are sapping the foundation of your faith."

Learning that I was from Oxford, he expressed a hope that I was not one of them.

"We have them, too, in this country," said he; "but the Lord be thanked! they have not made any way."

As the conversation proceeded, his energy increased each moment. No wonder. First, a glass of finkel was served round; then, a bottle of Bajersk öl was emptied. A flask of Madeira next appeared, which was fast followed by a bottle of Port wine. Upon which, I shook hands with the priest, and set off on my journey; his last words being an anathema on "those mischievous Puseyites."

As is well known, confirmation in the Lutheran Church is a most important affair. In Prussia, among the higher circles, no young lady is considered "out," until after receiving this rite. In Norway, it is, if possible, of still greater moment. Neither lads nor girls can obtain a good place, unless they have been confirmed. Many a time,

as I have travelled through the country, the boy who accompanied me, has told me, with an air of much complacency, that he had passed confirmation, and been commended by the priest.

For six months previously, candidates of both sexes go to the parsonage, 'Prestergaard,' once a week, and pass the whole day there. I have known instances of youths going as much as twenty miles, and more, for this purpose, starting the evening before. So universal is the rite, that 'confirmed and unconfirmed' are terms used where we should say, 'children and adults.'

A rather ludicrous case occurred to me. On one of the steam-boats, I found a bill of fare, with one price for 'confirmirte,' and another, and smaller, for 'unconfirmirte.' Is not this rather a premium on omitting the rite altogether?

Arrived at the parsonage, the candidates sit in rows, the girls on one side the room, and the boys on the other. They are there

instructed by the priest catechetically, in the articles of the Christian religion. At all events, it seems to answer well; and I have no doubt, from conversations I have had with the peasants, that the generality can give a much better "reason for the hope that is in them," than persons of the same class in the British Isles. The priest examines the girls and boys alternately; and a little wholesome emulation is excited by this procedure. It should be observed, that, previous to this, the children have all gone through a preliminary course of instruction, under the Skolemeister, who is generally the precentor.

One of Tiedemann's best pictures, illustrative of northern national customs, is "en Katekisation in Hitterdal kirke," (a catechizing in the church of Hitterdal.) In the centre of the aisle stands that great functionary, the Dominie, who is casting a look of mingled scorn and commiseration on an unlucky lad, the dullest of the catechumens, who is

making a mull of it. Girls and boys are both there; and the parents of the children are clustered along the picturesque walls of the ancient building.

While staying in the valley, I was witness to a moving scene at Sundalsören church. It was confirmation day: and the edifice was densely crowded. The boys and girls, dressed in their best, were arranged on either side of the aisle. The pastor, arrayed in his surplice and ruff, stood within the rails, and addressed the candidates with much affection and earnestness for about an hour. Many moist eyes were to be seen. Though, sooth to say, the solemnity of the occasion was somewhat marred by the boys' uncouth attempts, in the absence of pocket-handkerchiefs, to get rid of the superfluous rheum. At length, the candidates knelt in front of the rails, and the pastor addressed each one separately. "Say, Ole Olsen, will you resist the devil and all his works, and keep God's holy will and commandments, as long as you

shall live." Ole Olsen replies "Yes." "Well then, give me your hand," is the rejoinder, as though he would say, "in pledge of your sincerity." This done, the pastor placing his hand on the candidate's head, pronounced a blessing.

In Norway, every pastor who has a "call," *i. e.* a living, may perform the rite.

On taking leave of my kind and hospitable friends, the priest and his wife, I sailed down the fjord for some miles. On another occasion, when I was on this fjord, we ran most imminent danger. It was a sultry morning, and a perfect calm. Suddenly the wind rose, and in a few minutes increased to a tempest. The short chopping seas were up directly, covered with foam; the men became alarmed, and, had we not assisted in rowing, and reached the shelter of a jutting rock, the boat must have speedily been full and gone down. This day we had beautiful weather. At a place called Yordal, on the south of the fjord, I enjoyed some excellent wood ptarmigan

shooting. These birds, in their summer plumage, resemble our grouse, with the exception of having white wings; while in winter they are all white but the tail, which is black. It is only in particular places that they are to be met with.

They are most abundant near the sea; and more especially on a sunny slope grown over with the dwarf grey willow, and blue-berry, and intersected by rills of water. I have never failed to find them in such spots; while I know cases of Englishmen, who being unacquainted with this, have wandered whole days without seeing one. This was the secret of the numerous flocks of these birds to be found in Jordal. The only draw-back on the place, being that with the exception of a solitary sæter, there are no human habitations near the shooting ground. But a tent, which I had with me remedied this inconvenience.

I may also remark here that, not as in Scotland, the black-game are seldom to be found on the flats. The juniper-bushes

which cling to, and creep along the steep hill-sides bounding the valleys, are sure to hold these birds.

Lower down the fjord, I landed at a place called Bekken, and found good accommodation at the merchant's. Crossing over a narrow isthmus to Brevik, I took a boat across the beautiful Stangvik fjord to Surendalsören, being anxious to try the Surendals river. Though a fine stream, and a few miles up, abounding in beautiful pools, it has never afforded good sport with the fly. It was in vain that I tried all the contents of my book to inveigle the fish. My labour was all lost; and to add to my disgust, while returning homeward, I met a bonder with a fine salmon of about eighteen pounds, which he had caught in a deep hole with a bunch of lob-worms. All his tackle was home-made, and marvellous tackle it was. The sight of an Englishman fishing in the valley, had given the first impulse to his piscatorial propensities.

It may here be stated, that though no country surpasses this for the number of its salmon rivers and the magnitude of the fish, yet the salmon, which all allow to be a very capricious and inscrutable fish, seems to be more capricious in Scandinavia than elsewhere. The rise of an inch in the height of the water will often stop them from taking all day. If the bottom of the best pool in a river happens to be unsettled by the spring flood, not a fish will rest there as before. Then again, they will often appear in one river several days, before they are to be found in another; although the mouths of both rivers may be equidistant from the open sea, and the streams fed from similar sources. Thus, I have known them taken in the Rauma, nearly three weeks before they showed in the Eridsfiord river. As a general rule, you may be sure, that if several streams enter a fjord in its course inland, and these seemingly all admirably suited for salmon, the largest fish will swim by these, and make straight for the river

that enters its head. In fact, I should say they have a decided objection to turning right or left; but prefer moving straight on.

Nobody, that I am aware of, has ever attempted to explain the phenomenon of the unsporting character of the salmon that throng the rivers flowing into the Gulf of Bothnia. Though I have frequently seen salmon rising in them, yet I never succeeded in taking one with the fly. "You may try if you please, sir," said a Swedish landlord to me, in very good English—he had been cook on board a British man-of-war,—"but the salmon won't take the fly in this river. Many of your countrymen have been here to try, and never caught one."

CHAPTER XIII.

On board the Ship 'Aeger'—A Norwegian Belle—Teeth of the Sundalen Damsels—A paltry Enactment—Aspect of Trondjem—The Museum of Natural History—The Cathedral—The Miracle-working Well of St. Olaf—A melancholy portrait of a facetious Bishop—Origin of the Cathedral of Trondjem—Salmon-fishing at the Falls of the Nid—Cheap Lodgings—Sunday Entertainments—A narrow Escape from the "Steenbit"—Low State of the Science of Natural History in Norway.

But we will now resume our journey northwards, on board the ship 'Aeger.' In exchange for Miss Magdalena, we now had another Norwegian *belle*. Like most of her countrywomen, her taste in dress was bad. Imagine a broad amiable-looking face, set off with hair *à l'Impératrice Française*, with a tawdry blue silk bonnet, the inside of which

was garnished with a profusion of cock's-hackles, dyed purple, while a bright green bombazine gown finished her attire; add to which, a very conspicuous gold watch and chain. And then her teeth—they are far from perfection. Sooth to say, I have become somewhat fastidious in the matter of teeth, after seeing the exquisitely white and regular teeth of the Sundalen damsels.

This pearly whiteness, by the bye, is ascribed probably, with truth, to the acid of the brown bread and sour milk, which forms so large an ingredient in their food. In corroboration of which idea, it is said, that Catherine of Russia always ate rye-bread for this purpose. At Tonset, in Osterdalen, the peasants are constantly chewing a herb called harpix, which has the same purifying qualities.

Soon after this, we entered the picturesque Trondjem fjord, and arrived at the ancient capital of Norway, on the evening of the fourth day from leaving Bergen.

Will it be believed, that on pretence of cleansing the vessel, every passenger, luggage and all, must perforce go ashore, although, as in our case, he may have taken his berth for some days' journey beyond this. It was only by dint of an energetic remonstrance to the captain, that I succeeded in keeping my heavy luggage on board. The real reason of this paltry enactment, is to improve the trade of the hotels; which, as a matter of course, are dear, and by no means first-rate.

As, with the exception of that to the Namsen, there is no post-road north of this place, our carioles were crowded into boats, and after undergoing some very rough handling, which would utterly have smashed an English vehicle, were in due time lodged in the yard of the Hotel d'Angleterre, there to await our return from the north.

Economy of space does not seem to be studied here. None, if any, of the houses, reaching a third story, they cover a pro-

portionately larger extent of ground. Add to which, the streets are much wider than those in Bergen. The consequence is, that there is none of the busy bustle so prominent in that city, and altogether, notwithstanding the population numbers fifteen thousand, there is an air of solitude and flatness around, that cannot fail to strike the traveller. Of the shops, the least said the better. The Museum of Natural History is quite contemptible. There are very few specimens of birds, and these badly stuffed. The great sight of the collection, at least, in the estimation of my cicerone, seemed to be the skeleton of a diminutive Fin, who, after murdering six persons, put an end to his own life in prison.

From the Museum, we repaired to the Cathedral, which is built, according to Forbes, of bluish grey chlorite schist, obtained at no great distance from hence. It is well known from Mr. Laing's account. The intermixture of round and pointed arches in this venerable pile, is quite an architectural puzzle,

setting at nought, as it does, the usual theories of the precedence of the former in point of date. Suffice it to say, that for massive grandeur of style, delicate carving, and historic interest, it is well worth the examination of the antiquary.

The miracle-working well of St. Olaf is to be seen at the east end. Bernadotte made a point of drinking a glass of water from it. Not far from it, is a melancholy looking portrait of Pontoppidan, who lies buried in the the Cathedral. It cannot possibly be a faithful likeness of the facetious bishop. As the traveller wanders through the aisles, and round the walls of this vast church, much of which is in a dilapidated condition, the thought occurs to him, how, in so poor and thinly peopled a country, the funds could ever have been raised for the purpose. There is at present a considerable repairing fund, but as compared with what has to be done in the way of restoration, it is a mere drop in the ocean, and unless the country turns

Romanist again, there seems no chance of the ancient glories of the edifice being revived.

That was a happy idea of the Norwegians to make a saint of Olaf after murdering him. The presents of the thousand of pilgrims, who flocked from all parts of Christendom to visit his shrine, supplied the needful for the building of his magnificent monument. Vulgar superstition, ignorant of the very business-like way in which the Roman Catholic hierarchy set about these matters, has assigned a miraculous origin to the building. We are all aware how King Charles walked and talked half an hour after his head was cut off. St. Olaf's post mortem activity is reported to have been greater still. After falling by the hands of his subjects at Stikklestad, a fate richly deserved by him for his cruelty, he went so far as to erect the church which covered his bones. Here is the legend.

The Cathedral of Trondjem, which is still one of the most remarkable buildings in

Christendom, was still more so in the days of old, when its sky-high spire was standing. The church St. Olaf managed to build; but as for the spire, that was beyond his powers. In this dilemma, he promised to give the sun to whoever would undertake to finish the building. But so arduous was the task, that the only person that offered was a Troll, who dwelt at Hladhammer, not far from the city. In addition to the promised reward, he also made another stipulation, which was, that St. Olaf, if he should happen to become acquainted with his name, should not let it pass his lips. The saint, who was wise in his generation, while he agreed to this, secretly determined to find out his friend's name, by hook or by crook. So, at midnight, while the Troll was at work, he quietly unmoored his boat, and sailed alongside of Hladhammer. Listening attentively, he plainly distinguished a child crying on the hill, and a mother trying to pacify it.

"Be quiet, my babe," she said, "and it shall have heaven's gold when Twester comes home."

Overjoyed at the discovery, Olaf made the best of his way back to the city. Nor did he arrive a minute too soon; for the spire was just finished, all but the golden ball, which the Troll was at the very moment, fixing on the top of the vane.

"Twester," called out the saint, at the top of his voice; "Twester, I say, you are putting it a thought too much to the west."

No sooner did the Troll hear his own name pronounced, than he fell down dead to the bottom.

The services at the Cathedral, from what I could learn, seem to be very well attended. Holy Communion is administered, every Sunday, to some two hundred and fifty communicants. The first step towards restoration ought to be, to clear away the unsightly gallery pews, which belong to the chief families of the place. The view from

the top of the tower, of the city and fjord, has been compared, by Dr. Clarke, to the city and bay of Naples. It is, no doubt, the great sight of the place.

At the falls of the Nid, three or four miles from Trondjem, there is some good salmon fishing. Mr. Oversen, a gentleman living there, never refuses permission to Englishmen to fish on his side of the pool. At the hotel, we met a young countryman of ours, who had taken a lodging near the lower fall, and was catching his seven or eight fish a day, chiefly grilse. In consequence of some dispute, the peasants in the neighbourhood also claim the right of fishing. Our friend told us, that some half a dozen men, and as many women, were constantly flogging the water, or fishing with worms, and they all caught fish; a striking proof of the capabilities of the river, under proper management. One of our party went up, and caught, among other fish, a nineteen pounder. Just below the pool, there are

some rapids, where it is impossible to follow the fish with boat, or on foot. The best frequently make for this outlet; and your only chance, in that case, is strong tackle; don't yield an inch, and give the fish the butt of your rod, before he gets near the stream. From not following this method, I have lost good fish here.

Some twenty miles up the fjord, is Stordals Elv, where English friends of ours have taken good salmon.

Our young friend has been stopping at Steenkjær, a village still further up the fjord, about twenty miles beyond Levanger. For the small charge of half a dollar a day, he has obtained excellent lodgings at a large farmer's, of the name of Coldevin, not to mention an abundant supply of fresh meat. That neighbourhood, which has been well described by Mr. Laing, is one of the most populous, and well-cultivated districts in Norway; and the society, as our friend remarked, was very agreeable.

Sunday appears to be the day for receiving friends. After dinner, his host drove him to the house of a country proprietor, where he found about sixty ladies and gentlemen already gathered together. After coffee, two large flat-bottomed wooden vessels, enveloped in white napkins, after the manner of a Stilton cheese, and full of thick milk, peppered over with nutmeg and grated rye-bread, were brought in. Next followed spirits, pipes, and tobacco. Dancing then commenced, and the company polked and waltzed till three o'clock in the morning. Our countryman was totally ignorant of their language; and they, equally unskilled in English. But dance he could, and did; and as he tried to please, and they tried to please also, they all got on remarkably well together. There is a species of freemasonry established on these occasions, quite independent of words.

His fishing in the Steenkjær river, was chiefly confined to trout. The wild-fowl shooting he found excellent.

He had also some good sea-fishing, off Munkholm, the island fortress near Trondjem. Taking up, one day, what appeared to be a sort of eel, with a very fierce looking head, he was about to disengage the hook from its jaws, when the boatman fortunately stopped him. The next moment, the fish seized one of the benches of the boat, and crushed it to bits between his teeth. It was the steenbit, (cat-fish?) a most formidable brute, from which the angler had had such a narrow escape.

Among other sea-fish, he also took some soles. Now, singularly enough, though I explained the shape and appearance of this fish to several Norwegians, nobody could tell the Norwegian appellation for sole.

Here, again, I had a fresh instance of the utter absence, in this country, of anything like an accurate terminology for the several objects of Natural History, whether among fishes or birds. Thus, for instance, soles, flounder, turbot, holibut, skate, brill, all the

flat fish, in short, go by the general name of 'flynder.' So, likewise, every species of bird with a long bill,* be he snipe, woodcock, sandpiper, red-shank, or what not, is, in vulgar parlance, 'schneppe.' I have tried in vain to obtain a correct nomenclature for each, even among well-educated Norwegians; but it always resolved itself into 'schneppe.' It is true, that the proper name for woodcock is "rugte;" but not one Norwegian in a thousand is at all aware of this.

To-day I tried hard to get out of a countryman the true Norwegian term for newt. He knew what I meant; but "snög" was all he could say about it. That, however, clearly means "snake." So lizard is called "Fürbeen," *i. e.* "four-legs," a form equally applicable to an ox or any other quadruped. Will it be believed that in remote mountain lakes I have caught genuine trout for which

* The Trondjem innkeepers have also "long bills;" but, of course, they would not be included among the class —schneppe.

the natives could supply me with no other name than "lax," though this really means "salmon?" The word "öret," the real Norwegian name for trout, they had never heard of. Truly, a state of most pre-Adamite simplicity and ignorance!

CHAPTER XIV.

The Commerce of Trondjem—Reputed Exclusiveness of its Merchants—Trondjem and Bergen compared—Deficient Wharfage at Trondjem — Decline of its Trade with Sweden by way of Levanger—System of Smuggling formerly pursued by its Merchants—The Trondjem iron-foundry—Instance of Russian Venality.

BEFORE leaving Trondjem, a few words concerning its commerce. This is not what it was. While places like Aalesund, and Christiansand and Bergen, have been gradually advancing, Trondjem has gone backward. Various causes have been at work. Perhaps the chief one is its position, as a sea port, so much out of the direct line from the Luffodens to Bergen and Hamburg. While

Aalesund, for instance, is close to the open sea, a long extent of fjord must be passed before a vessel can reach Trondjem. This, of course, is attended with increased expense.

Again, the Trondjem merchants, it is said, have themselves to thank for the stand-still state of their city. It is true, I have found them personally most friendly and obliging; more particularly, Mr. Knutzen, the British consul; but this is not their general reputation. A lady on board the steamer, who had spent a winter in Trondjem, told me she found them very unsocial, compared with the jolly Bergensers. In fact, the merchants here, it is more than whispered, let their aristocratic notions stand in the way of their business. They prefer doing a small genteel trade in their own way, to extending their connection at the expense of their dignity. As a skipper said to me, "Why, Sir, if I arrive here with a load of fish from the north, I must go running after them, and dancing attendance day after day, before I can get a

decided answer whether they will buy or not."

Not so in Bergen. When a Nordlander arrives, the people there are immensely polite to him, and give themselves all sorts of trouble on his account. "Will the Captain, perhaps, require this or that?" they inquire. "If he will only be so good as to make out a list of what he wants, in the way of ship-stores or so forth, they will attend to it; all shall be provided." Of course, they take care to be paid handsomely for their trouble. But they are such adepts at making themselves useful to a stranger, that he cannot but appreciate the convenience. In fact, the smart Bergenser, in his keen appetite for business, will not unfrequently act the part of commissioner; while their less pliant and obliging cousins of Trondjem, who won't condescend to this sort of thing, are fairly left in the lurch.

Then again, the accommodation for landing goods at Trondjem is greatly deficient.

There are wharves in the Nid, but the water is so shallow that vessels of large burden cannot come alongside; and have consequently to land their cargoes in lighters in the open roadstead. For very many years an attempt has been made to remedy this inconvenience; but the parties, interested in the river anchorage have as yet succeeded in defeating all schemes of the kind. At last, however, as I was happy to learn in Trondjem, the movement party have been victorious; and a sort of port is just commenced near the mouth of the river.

Again, the trade with Sweden by way of Levanger, which at one time was very considerable, and chiefly of a contraband nature, has greatly fallen off, owing to the increased vigilance of the Swedish Custom House officers. Formerly, English goods of various sorts, but principally, fine cotton fabrics for ladies' dresses, which are greatly prized by the Swedes, used to be imported into Trondjem, and could actually, such was the profit

on them, afford to pay the Norwegian duty before passing the Swedish frontier. Many merchants in Trondjem used to have agents to facilitate this traffic at Levanger. At present there is only one person there engaged in the business. Not long ago, as my informant told me, he happened to be at Levanger, and had ocular proof that the trade is not quite extinct. The Swedish Custom House agents are so underpaid, that there will always be room for some smuggling. The method pursued was this:—

A quantity of barrels professing to be full of herrings were being sent up to the frontier; every fourth one of which, instead of herrings, contained English merchandize. The best time for doing this, is at the Levanger fairs, which are held in March and December; when a great concourse of Swedes, Quains, and Russians, came over the fjeld.

In Trondjem there is a Jernstöberi, or iron-foundry, belonging to a company of merchants, and conducted by an Englishman.

Probably it is with a view to encourage this branch of native industry, that plates of iron are used in the place of grave-stones in the church-yards of Trondjem. Upon some of them I observed the device of two inverted torches in relievo. While flowers, some cut, others planted, were placed around. Another countryman of ours conducts the copper mines of Meldal, which is not far distant. A railway is also projected from hence up the valley of the Guul, that cradle of Norwegian chivalry; the home of Hakon Jarl and Olaf Tryggeson. It might, without much difficulty, be carried as far as Roraas, the only inland town of Norway; which, besides possessing valuable copper mines, is also a great entrepôt for Swedish wares, such as glass, cutlery, &c.

I cannot forbear, before quitting Trondjem, to mention a fact which came to my knowledge, on the very best authority, illustrative of the utter venality (bestechlickhed) of the Russians throughout all classes. Not

long since, a Danish ship came to Trondjem, the cargo of which excited the curiosity of the Custom House people. It was of a very miscellaneous nature, consisting of biscuits, meal, and other edibles, all in bad condition; being pretty much, I should think, on a par with what the allies found in Sebastopol, and handed over to the Tartars, as unfit for their own consumption. For a long time, the shipper's conduct in sending such a cargo was inexplicable. At length the mystery was solved. The trash in question was Russian government stores, sold by the Russian naval officers to various parties, during the Schleswig war, when the Russian fleet was cruising in the lower Baltic!

In the same way, Norwegian merchant captains, if they should happen to be in want of stores, when off Cronstadt or Helsingfors, know of an easy method of replenishing them. Off they set in a boat to one of the Russian guard-ships, and have a few words privately with the captain. He perfectly understands

the nature of their business—a bargain is struck at once; and, in the course of the night, the required stores come alongside of the Norwegian.

This fondness for fingering what does not belong to them, on the part of the Russians, is manifest among the Russian sailors, who come to Hammerfest or Wadsö with cargoes of meal from Archangel. They are very good-natured, it is true, but incorrigible thieves.

"And how do you Norwegians and Swedes like these Russians?" I inquired of a Norwegian official.

"Like them!" was the reply. "We both hate them like the plague."

Several copies of the "Illustrated London News" are taken in at Trondjem. It ought to be a cheap place to live in. A medical gentleman, from whom I experienced great kindness, on another occasion, when I was confined here by illness for a week, demanded a most moderate fee.

CHAPTER XV.

Departure from Trondjem — Unfortunate flowers—The Vessel's freight—The Pastor of the Namsen district—The Parish Priest at Carlsö—Isolated State of the Norwegian Clergy—Characteristics of the Peasantry — Instances of Norwegian Superstition — Coast Scenery—The natural Tunnel through the Rock of Torghätten—The Island of Tjotö—The Range of the Seven Sisters—A Huntsman's first experience as Piscator—The four-peaked Threnen—The Bird Island and Lord Brougham's Portrait—An Oxonian's Adventure with a Bear—English Sportsmen in Norway—Commercial travellers—A Party of Swedish Students—Fraternization of the Students of Upsala, Copenhagen, Christiania—A novel kind of Salmon-trap—The artificial Breeding of Salmon.

WE left Trondjem on July 18, at 4, A.M. There were two hundred passengers on board; our friends the Quakers among the

number. Of the living freight, which accompanied us from Bergen, I must not forget to mention some unfortunate flowers, geraniums, sweet-williams, and cabbage-roses, which have still a long journey before them. The lady, their protectress, no doubt destines them as a present for her friends in the Arctic circle.

These people are passionately fond of flowers. But the sea air and rough usage to which they are subject on board ship, is already, I fear, beginning to tell on their constitution. The roses in particular, by their sickly aspect, seem to shrink at the thoughts of being transplanted to such a distant clime. It would seem that the supply of flowers is short, or that they do not multiply well northward, for I have often found that people coming from the south have flower-pots set with flowers, among their baggage.

But it is not in horticultural specimens alone that the people of the far north are

deficient. The population is so sparse up there, that the supply of servants is chiefly obtained from the south. Thus, on this steamer, there are several young men and women, who, allured by the hope of higher wages, are going to try their fortune in Finmark. There is a lot of beef, too, on board, being the fortnightly supply from Trondjem, destined for an Englishman at the Alten mines. If it does not become tender by the time it reaches its destination, it will not be for want of thumping and kicking by the passenger's heels. There are also cabbages on board, for the supply of the North Cape steamer; all which indicates that we are not journeying towards a fat and fruitful land.

The priest of the Namsen district is on board; he leaves us at Boroen, the *stoppested*, or station, nearest his abode. His parish contains three churches, one of them twenty-eight English miles from where he resides.

Among the passengers, there was an intelligent old gentleman, who talks good German, and a little English. He was formerly, I find, the parish priest of Carlsö, near Hammerfest; and remembers Sir Capel Brook visiting the island thirty years ago. Their medium of communication was Latin.

He is now pensioned off, and living among his friends at Bergen. By a very wholesome regulation of the country, any clergyman may, after a certain number of years, become superannuated, and receive as a pension about one third of his former income for the remainder of his life. In his youthful days, the University of Christiania, in spite of the repeated applications of the Norwegians to Denmark for the establishment of a national university, was as yet not founded. So, like the other Norwegian youth, destined for the learned professions, he had to go to the University of Copenhagen. While there, he witnessed the bombardment of the city in 1807, and the

destruction of the Danish fleet by the English.

The change was, indeed, terrible, he said, for a young student to be transplanted from the lively microcosm of the University, and set down, as he was, in a little parish in the mountains, where there was not a soul to speak to but Bonders. Thus banished from all that is intellectual and social, a person became, he said, almost "verwildert," savage, in spite of himself.

Let me here remark, that on the whole, considering the great difficulties with which the Norwegian clergy have to contend, chiefly owing to the state of isolation in which they live, that they are a great credit to the country, and I have mostly found them a sound-thinking, well-informed, kind, and hospitable class of men.

The old gentleman, on my pressing him hard, was forced to confess that many of the peasantry are a lazy, obstinate, and conceited set of people, chiefly from the want of com-

petition and intercourse with the world without. A prominent trait in their character, is a sort of Bonderstolz, peasant-pride, which, while it prevents them from doing anything very bad, is equally fatal to improvement and enlightenment. In spite of all the efforts made at introducing a better system of agriculture, they will adhere to the system of their forefathers.

In the south, I learned that there is still a good deal of immorality; and also in the extreme north of the country; the houses being so confined, from want of a good supply of suitable timber for building, that the sexes are often packed closer together, than is compatible with the preservation of proper modesty. The peasants, he told me, know perfectly well what is right, and are very punctual church-goers, but he feared, from his long experience of thirty-eight years, that there was still a great deal of the *opus operatum* about their religious exercises.

Superstitions still linger, he said, among

the lower orders. On the eve of St. John, it is still the custom to light fires all round the fold, in order to prevent the trolls from injuring the cattle. If this were not done, dire consequences, it is thought, would result.

A Colonel B—— of the engineers, a most intelligent person, who some years ago was employed by the Norwegian government to make a trigonometrical survey of the coast, is one of our travelling companions.

He also relates an amusing instance of popular superstition.

While engaged in scaling the precipitous heights of the Sandhorn, an island south of the Salten Fjord, which we shall pass to-morrow, the peasant accompanying him, met with an accident, which might have proved fatal. His foot slipping, he rolled into an abyss beneath. Wonderful, however, to relate, beyond a dreadfully crushed ancle, his injuries were slight. Assistance being, at length, procured, the sufferer was carried

to the nearest habitation. Before long, a Lapland crone was in attendance, whose province it was to prescribe on such occasions. The most eminent members of the faculty could not have acted with greater decision than she. At once proceeding to the nearest brook, she procured seven smooth stones, and placed them in a pot full of water upon the fire. As soon as it boiled, pronouncing certain incantations, she commenced fomenting the patient's wound with this notable elixir. At this juncture, the Colonel interfered, put the hag to the right-about, and sent to Bodö for the doctor.

Between Trondjem and Tromsö there are only three places where it is possible to meet with any weather. These are in passing over the North and South Folden Fjords, and the West Fjord. As there is no barrier of islands to beat off the south-western swell, the passage is often very rough when the wind is from that quarter. The ladies and some of the gentlemen were anxious before

arriving at the North Folden, but they were quieted by the assurance of the captain, that we should have a smooth run over, and so we had.

Not the least remarkable feature in the coast scenery, which becomes grander and grander as we advance, is the huge natural tunnel, some half a mile in length, which perforates the lofty rock of Torghätten. It is about three hundred and eighty feet above the sea, and from ninety to two hundred and twenty high. So said my informant. Pontoppidan makes it, I think, six thousand feet long, and three hundred feet high.

This tunnel was executed in a much more expeditious way, than that usual among persons of ordinary engineering capacity. Talk of the American boring machine, why this was done in less time than I have taken to describe it. The story runs thus:—

"A mighty Jutul, who dwelt on a mountain near Lurö, fell in love with a beautiful damsel, residing at Lekö, an island that we

have already passed. But she was a hard-hearted kind of Circe, transforming all his messengers, not exactly into pigs, but into hog-backed rocks, which are still to be seen apparently bobbing out of the water. Wearied, at length, and exasperated by her contemptuous rejection of his suit, the lover would stand it no longer. Seizing his bow, he drew it with all his force. As the lady, at whom he aimed, lived a trifling distance of eighty miles off, some extra exertion was, of course, necessary. Off sped the bolt, passing right through the granite mountain of Torghätten. This impediment, however, materially lessened its speed; so that it fell harmless at the feet of the lady. Whether the day began to dawn at this moment, or from whatever cause it was that what followed took place, the historian does not relate. But this much is certain, that both lover and mistress were at this instant transformed to stone, and there they stand staring at each other till the day of doom. The Hestman (horseman) stands

just upon the Arctic circle, as plain to see with his ample cloak, his waving plumes, and his gigantic steed, as the duke himself at Hyde Park corner. Only that it would require the pen of the author of the Castle of Otranto to do his dimensions and general appearance full justice.

It is seldom that Nordlanders, as they come sailing by, omit to take off their hats in token of respect to him. As it happens, not a few of the Jaegts are meeting us at this moment, their high square sail, filled with a northern breeze. On board some of these vessels, you can descry as many as twenty men. These are the peasants, who, having an interest in the great piles of fish on board, are sailing as passengers to superintend the selling of the cargo at Bergen. The rounded mountains are now exchanged for heights of more bold and rugged outline. From Torghätten to Kunnen we have, in the opinion of Forbes, the most magnificent coast scenery in Europe.

On the island of Tjotö once dwelt Harek, the leader of the Bonders against the tyrannical Olaf at the battle of Slikklestad. It is now the residence of Mr. Brodkorb, one of the wealthiest and most hospitable proprietors in all Norway. The singular range of the Seven Sisters, which rise to the height of above four thousand feet behind his house, at Sövig, and which are visible for a great distance, in all their grotesque varieties of profile, block up the entrance to the Vefsen river, one of the very best in Norway for salmon fishing. An Irish gentleman has been so lucky as to obtain a lease of it at a very moderate rate. To catch a fish of forty pounds and upwards, is not a rare event, I understand, with him; though the fishing is chiefly confined to one pool. Another river, the Fusten, close by, is likewise a fine salmon stream.

A few miles north of the Vefsen, and opposite the island of Donnaes, lies the entrance to the Ranen Fjord. Kobberdal

is the nearest station. Two salmon rivers flow into this sheet of water. I remember once dropping an Englishman here, for the purpose of fishing. Across country he could hold his own with the best of them; but as for fishing, he had never, I believe, caught, or seen caught, a salmon in his life. Later, an amusing account, reached me of his first appearance in the character of Piscator, on the banks of the Ranen.

He speedily found a bouncing fish on the hook. But being ignorant of the rudiments of the art, and that he ought to render the fish powerless, by getting him as soon as possible out of the stream, he thought he could not do better than pull him hard against the stream. The fish being strong and active, and doubly so in the current pulled also; and to avoid being broken, the fisherman let him go. Down went the salmon in the full swing of the stream, wherein his great strength lay; and after her puffed the Englishman over stock and stone, by a miracle avoiding break-

ing his neck. At last, after a run of a mile and a half; the water becoming quieter, he contrived to get the fish ashore.

Report assigned two hours for the operation, I am not sure that he did not faint at the end of it. He had no idea before, he said, that salmon fishing was such hard work. The fish, he told me, weighed twenty-five pounds, and had on it the sea louse.

Islands, or rather mountains, now begin to bolt upright from the sea like spectres, some near, frowning sternly down upon us as we pass; the features of some softened by the distance; such as Lovunen and Lurö, and the four-peaked Threnen, and Tomö—this is, indeed, a sight worth beholding. Then again, on the mainland, the mountains are scored with deep furrows, filled with snow, parallel to one another, as if some of the demons of the old mythology had been driving great graving tools from top to bottom, by way of amusement. Then, by degrees, we open the serrated ridge to the

right, facing Rodö; the savage peaks backed here and there by a vast snow field, (the Fondal), out of which the tips of a glacier may be seen protruding. At Lurö, as the captain informed me, the gulf stream, about which people talk so much now-a-days, is supposed to come nearest to the coast. This is proved by the higher temperature of the water, lately investigated by the Admiralty, and the quantity of tropical seeds found in it.

The fine headland of Kunnan, dangerous to mariners, is at the northernmost part of the province of Helgeland. Here dwelt of old, fair Guri, daughter of a Jutul. So great was her beauty, that many suitors fought for her hand. All those stones you see yonder, peeping out of the sea, were the stones they threw at each other. Ansind, a Jutul, was the victor, and he wedded the damsel. They lived long and happily together, till her father was slain by the *Staerke sout af der magtige Gout* (the strong race of the mighty Goths); who came from the East. Ansind and his

On the Reisen, another river near this, an Oxford friend had a slight adventure with a bear, if it deserves the name. Bruin had slaughtered a cow, part of which he had eaten, placing the remainder in the cupboard, *i. e.* in a hole made for the occasion. Being a provident beast, he never neglects to do this. He generally comes the second or third night to finish the remainder. My friend had lain concealed in a hole, well covered with brushwood, about twenty yards from the carcase, for several hours, carefully abstaining from his favourite weed. Seeing by the animal's traces, from which side he had come before, he took it for granted that he would return to his larder from the same direction, and pointed his rifle accordingly. Behind him, the forest had been burnt by a recent conflagration.

At last he heard the dried branches crackling and snapping behind him, and it was evident that something was approaching. This was too much to submit to quietly.

For it was manifest that if it was the bear, he would have to come straight over the sportsman's prostrate form which might lead to unpleasantness. So up he got. The brushwood flying from him in all directions. Bruin it was—who forthwith scampered off: our friend fired and missed.

Apropos of English sportsmen in this country, it has always struck me that they are looked upon by the natives with a species of commiseration, as if they were a little daft. Those who have read Dr. Hooker's interesting journal, will remember how the inhabitants of Sikkim were no less astonished at the diligence with which he travelled about in search of rare plants. They don't see the *cui bono?*

"What can possess you, with such a beautiful country at home, so level and fertile, to come wandering about in such a savage, rugged region as this?"

"Er de kiöbmand," they go on to inquire—*i. e.*, "are you a merchant?"

"No."

"What then?"

"I come for the scenery and salmon-fishing."

"What do you do with the salmon—sell them?"

"No; eat what I want, and give the rest away."

The erratic Don Quixote could not have been a greater object of compassion than an Englishman is, when he makes this avowal.

"I am sure you must get well paid for all this hard walking day after day," said to me the wife of a strong fellow, who had carried our game bag. "Hans gets quite tired with it. Our Storkarren, *i. e.* great folks, if they have any money, think all they have to do is to get fat and do nothing."

The remark of the simple dame is pretty near the truth. Different from that pursuing, bustling animal, the Englishman, whether it be business or pleasure that engages him, the Norwegian naturally takes things easily. Let

him only have a competence, and he will trouble his head very little about work of any kind.

Commercial travellers must have a hard time of it here. None of your neat buggies, with the inside full of patterns, and the comforts of the "Commercial Room" in the evening. I, this year, encountered a Norwegian bagman travelling for a Bergen house. In the course of the summer he had penetrated to the bottom of most of the fjords between Trondjem and the North Cape, wherever a handelsman was to be found; travelling thousands of miles in open boats, and more than once in imminent danger from sudden tempests.

Near this we were joined by a party of Swedish students, who had been exploring the glaciers and snow fields, which had at times been dimly visible from the deck of the steamer. Without being as preposterously dressed as their German brethren, they seemed quite as devoted to singing and strong

drink. Glasses of arrack were handed round on deck; and the glories, past and future, of "Gamle Norge," (Old Norway), sung with great gusto. The ladies lent the aid of their voices; while the old Colonel was the gayest of the gay, acting as conductor of the band, and supplying the words or the melody, when the rest were at fault.

In spite of Mr. Ole Bull, of whom she is very and justly proud, I should say that Norway is not the land of song. Music does not penetrate through all classes, as it does in Sweden. In fact, most of the Norwegian airs, as they are called, are Swedish. A blind German singer on board, who was going to give a concert at Hammerfest, told me he thought the Norwegians fonder of their dollars than song; while of the Swedes' enthusiasm for music, he spoke very highly. I must not omit to state that this minstrel informed me, in confidence, that his voice was superior to Staudigl's!

It is a very common practice, for the

students of Upsala, Copenhagen, and Christiania, to exchange visits during the summer. Monster trips are arranged, and a steamer chartered, and the whole University is transplanted bodily to a distant shore. Thus I have seen all the young learning of Copenhagen, national antipathies for the time forgotten, fraternizing with the no less ardent spirits of Christiania, and swearing to each other eternal friendship. Such *réunions* cannot but have a beneficial effect, and are, at all events, happy auguries for Scandinavian unity.

Now and then, as we coast along, I have descried large patches of white upon the rocks, not many feet from the water's edge. At a distance, they looked like snow, or the foam of a cascade. Upon inquiry, I found that they are neither snow nor foam, but the work of the paint brush. It is, in short, a novel kind of salmon trap.

The fish while hurrying up the fjords take the dab of white paint for a waterfall; led by

natural instinct, they make towards the gushing stream, and are caught in a fine net spread in front of it.

A useful hint may be obtained from this by the young salmon fisher. It shews how desirable it is to keep at some distance from the water, as the fish are so observant of objects on the shore. Many a fish, by the too near approach of the fisherman, is thus scared away without his knowing it.

Talking of salmon, I see by a Christiania newspaper on board, that the breed of salmon in the south, about Drammen and elsewhere, has been so much diminished by spearing and netting, that the attention of the government has been called to the artificial methods of breeding this fish, now so extensively adopted in France and Great Britain. One, Mr. Hetting, has been commissioned for this purpose, and he is travelling about to teach the proper method of proceeding. His chief difficulty is to meet with streams which con-

tinue unfrozen all the year. For though the fjords north of Bergen, and from thence to the Jacobs Elv are always open, the great streams that descend into them are an immoveable mass of ice from autumn to May.

CHAPTER XV.

Bodö—The consequences of Sacrilege—Snipe-Shooting—Eider Down—A dangerous Current at the junction of the Salten and Skjerstad Fjords—Old Woman's Island—Mysterious Disappearance of a Bear—Sweetness wasted on the Desert Air—A Momentous Query—The Famous Maelstrom—The Northern Cod Fishery—Laws respecting the preparation of the Stock Fish—Perils to which the Fishermen are exposed—A Catastrophe—Cod-liver Oil—Tolls and Tithes paid by the Fisheries—Gullibility of the Cod-fish.

At Bodö, a place containing a few score inhabitants, but dignified by the name of a By, or town, the steamer stops some hours to coal. At one time there was an English depôt here, which led to a good deal of scandal, as it subsisted principally by smuggling.

Norwegians are still sore on this matter. The place, from some reason or other, has never thriven, and it is now determined to form another By in the Luffodens. The advantages of a By are various; but the chief one is, that it can export fish and oil to foreign parts direct.

I find that my good friend, Mr. Arviskau, the Amtmann, or Governor of the province, has, since last year, been removed to Molde. He was really a sportsman and a capital shot, and always had a good pointer of the Danish breed, and very well broken.

Near the church, which lies across the moor, are some hillocks, the resting places of deceased Vikings. In the church wall is a figure in stone of a former priest. A young peasant, while in drink, swung his axe, and cut off some of the figure's fingers. He forthwith took to his bed—so popular rumour will have it—from which he never rose again.

On the moor around this, plover, curlew,

and other waders, hatch their young, and try all sorts of devices to mislead intruders. Very large solitary snipes have also been shot in the neighbourhood by friends of mine. Some young Englishmen leave us here, to try their luck with the gun. We are now in the country for wild fowl of every kind. There are eider preserves all along the coast—eggevœr as they are called. The market price for eider-down is about ten shillings the Norwegian pound, which is a little more than ours. The down from Spitzbergen is inferior, being gathered in the midst of fogs and damps. Its price is less.

Eastward from this, runs the Salten Fjord, at whose extremity lies Sulitelma, six thousand two hundred feet high—the highest of the Arctic mountains. In the river Salten, salmon have been caught by Englishmen with the fly.

At the junction of the Salten and Skjerstad Fjords, there is a very singular current, which, I am credibly informed, is at times

even more dangerous than the far-famed Maelstrom, to the north-west of this. A clergyman, in whose parish it lies, assured me that lives are lost there every year; chiefly, perhaps, owing to the *drumdristighed, i.e.*, foolhardiness, of the Salten boatmen. It is said to be caused by a table of rock lying across the fjord. The water, after passing this, suddenly descends to a lower level; and the whirling and gurgling which ensue, are quite appalling. Large boats are liable to be spun round, and disappear in the vortex. Indeed, it is necessary to have boats of a peculiar shape, to thread the dangers with safety. Of the utter carelessness of the Norsk boatmen, more will be said hereafter.

Some twenty miles north of Bodö, is the station of Kerringö, or Old Woman's Island. All these places ending in ö, are islands. Here I once stopped some days, and shot both grey and brown ryper. A party of young Englishmen shot a bear here,

two or three summers ago. The animal, which had slaughterd a horse, was sleeping after his banquet, in the middle of a morass. Five rifles being discharged at him at once, he gave up the ghost without delay. Subsequently, a peasant shot another near the same spot. The beast was badly wounded. The man followed the traces of blood, and footmarks, to the side of a lake, where they suddenly ceased. The natives account for it, by saying that, finding he was mortally wounded, the animal took to the water, and buried himself among the weeds at the bottom. This idea, whether correct or not, is universal in Norway. It is well known that certain aquatic birds will do this. I myself shot a duck, which immediately dived, and never reappeared; though, had it come to the top again, the nature of the locality was such, that I must have seen it. This habit of that bird is made the subject of a beautiful comparison, if I remember, in Frithiof.

At Grötö, the steamer threads a narrow passage; so narrow, that a biscuit might be pitched ashore. On the edge of this dreary defile, lives one of the principal merchants of these parts. A boat puts off from his house, full of gaily-dressed ladies, armed with parasols, to keep off the intense rays of the Arctic sun. Two Barcelona poodles swim after them, at the imminent risk of being run over by the steamer. This large party is professedly escorting, on board, a single female acquaintance, who is going northward with us. One pennyworth of bread to all that sack. No such thing. The dear creatures come to see and be seen. They have not a neighbour who can appreciate their charms, and those becoming bonnets for many a long mile. Except on Sundays, and when the steamer stops, they hardly ever behold a stranger. The poet surely had visions of this place in his eye, when he sung,

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

So, with true feminine instinct, they come on board for five minutes, while the Postaabner is giving and receiving letters, and have a chat with their acquaintance, of whom there are always plenty on board. The lower classes follow the example of their betters in this respect. A station back, I saw two tidy lassies boldly row off to the steamer, and begin a colloquy from their boat with some of the passengers; arranging their hair and kerchief the while, with no little coquetry. And who shall say, that those five minutes do not often lay the foundation of years of after happiness?

But off we go again, putting to the right about a multitude of eider ducks, shovellers, cormorants, and grey geese; which serve to remind us that we are getting into the heart of the breeding quarters of half the swimming birds of Europe. Leaving to the right the towering headland of Skotstind, the portal of the Vest Fjord, we steam across it for Balstad. The weather is for-

tunately fine in this five hours' reach of open sea; otherwise, many of us would not have leisure or inclination to admire the granite mountains of the Luffodens, which curve round in front of us, rearing their pyramidical forms, broken up into every variety of abrupt outline, till they terminate in the solitary precipices of Röst, far off in the south-western horizon.

Next to Röst, lies Værö, adjoining to which is Mosken. Between this last named island and the larger one of Moskenes, lies the famous Maelstrom. It is by no means so dangerous as is imagined. By watching their opportunity, which depends on the state of the tide, boatmen contrive to make a tolerably smooth passage across. It is when the stream and wind are contrary, that the real danger is. The sea then lashes itself into a chaos of whirlpools and broken water, in which no boat can live.

The name of the island of Röst, close by this, is evidently the same as the old

term for a whirlpool, which is still retained in the Scottish isles; *e. g.*, Sumburg Roost, between the Orkneys and Shetlands.

As we cross over to the Luffodens, it will be a good opportunity to give some account of the cod fishery, for which these islands have long been so celebrated. The importance of it may be gathered from the statement of a Norwegian writer, that, were it not for the Northern fishery, the whole of Finmark, and part of Nordland, would be inhabited only by nomad Finns; and the towns all along the coast would languish and disappear.

The fishing commences in January. Open boats then arrive from all parts of Norway, and take up their positions along the coast, from Balstad on the west, to Bretesnes, on the island of Great Molle, on the east. In each boat, there are generally five men, one of whom commands, and takes the helm. At Henningsvär, a favourite station, there are as many as nine hundred boats

congregated; which will give some idea of the numbers. It is computed that there are, at least, three thousand five hundred boats, which gives an aggregate of twenty-one thousand men, employed exclusively in fishing. But, besides these, there is a gathering of the eagles to the spoil, in the shape of numberless Jægts and Jagts, belonging to merchants from far and near along the coast, which come to buy oil and fish, and sell groceries, &c. No foreigners are allowed. At Svolvär alone, my informant told me, there were not less than a hundred and forty of these vessels. In some respects, the scene resembles that at the "gold diggings;" people of all classes, who are at a loose end, joining the sport.

The fishermen, who begin to assemble soon after New Year's Day, live in huts along shore; which, together with the permission to fish, they hire of the proprietors of the adjoining land, at certain rates fixed by Government. If the morning is fine,

and weather suitable, the government officers appointed for that purpose, hoist the requisite signal, and the boats go out and set their nets and lines generally at right angles to the run of the coast. If the weather is bad, no signal is hoisted; and every one venturing out, under those circumstances, is liable to a fine of five dollars, and to have all his fish seized. Sometimes, they are prevented, by the weather, from taking up their lines for two or three days. At times, if a wind springs up suddenly, they cannot reach home, and have to run for it, some forty or fifty miles across the fjord. Most of the day is consumed in fishing with a hand-line, and in taking up the nets and long-lines. Nets were first used for this purpose in 1655. The floats are of glass.

On getting to shore, the fish are gutted, and hung up to dry on poles and cross-bars, which they hire of the proprietors along the coast. These are stock-fish, (so called, because they are dried on stocks or poles), and are

unsplit. Others, which are sold to the owners of the Jægts, are split open, salted down, and packed flat in the holds of these vessels. On obtaining a cargo, they leave for home. When they arrive there, the fish are taken out of the vessel, washed, and dried upon the rocks. These are klip-fish, *i. e.*, rock-fish. The stock-fish is most of it shipped to Trieste, for Austrian and Italian consumption. One eighth of it, however, goes to Holland for the Catholic countries on the Rhine. The klip-fish goes almost exclusively to Spain. A person was despatched by the Government to investigate the Newfoundland method of preparing the salt fish; as this is cheaper than the Norwegian article. But it was found, upon trial, not to answer, chiefly owing, I believe, to the difference of climate. Hitherto, the ports of Portugal and France have been closed against the importation of Norwegian fish: with the exception of roe; which the fishermen of Brest use as bait for

Sardines. Salt-fish, which belongs to neither of the above categories, is exported to Russia exclusively, but only to the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars per annum.

As it is of the utmost consequence to Norway that her stock-fish should continue to retain its high reputation, the laws are very stringent respecting it. By law, the fisherman is forbidden to take down the fish before the 12th of June; nor is he allowed to hang any up after the 14th of April. There is a fine of two dollars on every hundred fish taken down, or hung up before or after the above dates respectively. By this means, the fish is properly dried; were it not for this precaution, the notorious carelessness of the peasant might be fatal to the interests of the fishery.

All the fish caught after April 14th, are prepared as klip-fish; but the fishing is virtually over then; and the men leave the Luffodens, returning, however, in the course of the summer, to take away the stock-fish.

The livers are put into barrels, brought from home for the purpose, or sometimes sold to the merchants on the spot. The best oil is that which exudes from the natural fermentation of the liver. This is the cod-liver oil so extensively used in medicine. What we call train-oil is obtained after boiling. "Tran," whence "train," is the Norsk for all sorts of fish oil. We may remark, that under the appellation, cod-liver oil, is classed the oil obtained from the liver of various other fish, as the shark, and the ling, but especially of the sei or coal-fish. This is caught in the summer in large quantities, especially in the Bay of Varanger. The liver of this fish is richer in oil than the cod.

From what has been said, it will be seen that everything is managed according to strict rule. The health of the fishermen is also cared for by the government, which despatches doctors to the rendezvous; while others come of their own accord in search

of practice. Upon the whole, there is less sickness than might be expected. But in some winters, a fearful number of lives are lost at sea. The winter of 1853 was particularly disastrous. I could not discover that any amusement is provided to relieve the tedium of labour. No theatrical diversions, such as we read of among the Arctic voyagers, or at Sebastopol. The lust of dollars, apparently, gives the requisite fillip to the constitution. Their work done, the men sleep off the fatigues of the day, cribbed, cabined, and confined in their wooden huts. But even here, their lives are in peril.

Not a hundred yards from the merchant's at Balstad, the station for which we are steering, a spot was pointed out to me, where, in the month of March last, a fisherman's bothy stood. In this, twelve men lay sleeping, after the fatigues of the day; but of these twelve, only one survived the dreadful catastrophe that overtook them. Loosening its embrace of the beetling crags

overhanging this place, an avalanche dashed down, and bore hut and men into the sea, smashing, crushing, and drowning them in a moment.

During the period of the fishery, no steamer is allowed to come near, for fear of scaring the fish. The cannon of Copenhagen are said to have frightened the cod from the Baltic. Formerly, cod-fishing was actively pursued south of Stadland (above-mentioned,) but of late years the fish have left the coast south of that point. It is true, that this fishery is mainly carried on on the concave side of the Luffodens; and here the fish lie thickest. On the outer or northern side, there are also vast numbers of fish; but it is less visited, from the little protection to be obtained there against the fury of the Arctic ocean. Later in the year, towards the summer, the fish work northwards along the coast of Finmark. And it now frequently happens, that after earning their eighty or hundred dollars a man at

the Luffodens, the same parties start for Berlewaag and elsewhere, and double their earnings.

Cod-liver oil costs, on the spot, from five to six dollars the barrel of one hundred and twenty pots. A wine bottle holds about three-fourths of a pot. So that, in round numbers, at the highest price, it costs about one shilling the imperial gallon. By comparing this price with that of Dr. Jongh's "brown cod-liver oil," which professes to come from the Luffodens, we can form some idea of the profit made by somebody. It costs nine shillings per quart imperial. No wonder, then, that he can pay several thousands a-year in advertisements. Is it true that Dr. Jongh is only another name for Professor Holloway?

Before quitting the subject, it will be as well to give a few further statistics of this all important branch of Norwegian industry. All towns are permitted to export fish. Bergen exports more than half the stock-

fish. But of late, the Romsdal towns, as they are called, have become dangerous rivals to it in the klip-fish trade. Trondjem and Bergen each export less than one-fourth of all the klip-fish. Half the oil goes from Bergen. Next come Tromsö and Hammerfest. One-third of it goes to Holland, and a good deal to Altona. There is still a heavy export duty on all kinds of fishy products. Twenty-eight thousand dollars are also raised annually by the duty on salt; the greater part of which is used in curing the fish.

Until the year 1851, a tithe of all the fish and oil was paid to the church of the district. But instead of this tax, which was very vexatious, and led to much dispute and dishonesty, an extra tax of two skillings per waag—thirty-six pounds avoirdupois—is levied on all fish exported: while on oil, the additional duty is twelve skillings, or five-pence English, per tonde—thirty gallons. As the tithes of the Church frequently belong, espe-

cially in the north, to private individuals, these persons will be reimbursed by the government for their loss. In the south, we may here remark, the tithes more frequently belong to the parish.

In many places, these tithe awards are now being made with a view to a final settlement. But the operation is attended with much difficulty, as it is not so easy to show, in many cases, what the tithes have amounted to, and it is the interest of individuals to represent them as having been larger on an average of years, than they really were. If the Norwegian government consults the true interests of the country, it will take the imposts off as much as possible. Here follows a list of the value of fish exports in the year 1846. No book of later date has been published, but the figures below may be taken, perhaps, fairly to represent the present state of the trade. Stock-fish, 640,000 dollars; klip-fish, 464,000 dollars; oil, 600,000 dol-

lars; roe, 80,000 dollars; spring herrings, 1,375,000 dollars; summer ditto, 175,000 dollars; lobsters, 20,000 dollars; making a total of 3,454,000 dollars; which, with other exports of a similar nature, which cannot be classed under any of the above heads, will make the grand total value of fish exported at least four million of dollars, or about a million sterling.

Before quitting this modern "fish tattle," we must not forget to mention that the gullibility of the cod-fish has become a bye-word. When a Norwegian wishes to stigmatize a person for stupidity, he does not call him "goose;" that is a misnomer. For it is very well known that a more wary and astute bird than the goose is not easily met with. Witness for me Brennus and his horde. Torsk, "cod," is the word, which at once suggests itself to a Scandinavian.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Luffodens—Waagekalle—Jotul—A distant view—Better days—Domestic affairs of Eider Ducks—An Osprey in trouble—Swartsund—Homes in the Wilderness—Steilo—Polar Ice—The climate of Norway—Russian Filibusters.

AFTER a six hours' run, we find ourselves under the shadow of the Luffodens, and have a near view of the fantastic shapes that the mountains assume. With very little stretch of imagination, all sorts of resemblances may be made out.

On one headland, you see a Titanic toadstool, the throne, perhaps, of a Scandinavian Oberon. Further on, a hole is pierced clear through the cliffs, and you can see daylight

beyond. Another peak is called Ambolt—anvil—which it exactly resembles. Just by Svolvar, is a great slip of rock, standing upright, like a pillar, half way down the precipice, on the top of which are perched two tiny persons in stone called Jetten. In another cliff, a complete embrasure is scooped out; and in the opening, you espy a little man, with what you might fancy is a rifle under his arm. But this is an error, as will plainly appear from the following story. This is the well-known Waagekalle.

He was not always so motionless as now. Once he was a Jotul, who used to amuse himself by rowing out under the rocks, and fishing in the clear moonshine. One night, while he was thus occupied, he was caught in a sudden storm. Stoutly he battled against the waves; but, with all his efforts, he did not reach the land till it was close upon dawn. As these people have a natural repugnance to the light of day, he whipped

the sail under his arm, and made, with all the speed he could, for his abode. But it was too late; and the first beams of the morning, just then appearing, lighted on the unlucky Jotul. As a matter of course, he was turned into stone. There he is, with the sail under his arm, and his broad fisherman's hat on his head, just as he stood that day. The mariners, as they sail by, fancy he sometimes bows his head to them; and they never fail to return the salute.

The half-sunken rocks, likewise, under the cliffs, ought not to be passed over in silence. That low ledge yonder, is occupied by an astonishing number of cormorants and gulls—a kind of lower house, in most animated deliberation. While, on a higher level, is a kind of upper house, gravely sitting on what look like woolsacks, but which are, in reality, heaps of white guano. I cannot understand, by the bye, why fishermen should not use the cormorant to fish for us, like

the Chinese; especially now, when Russian hemp is so scarce.

We thus coast along, inside the Luffodens, stopping at various stations, until, at length, we approach the mouth of Rafte-sund, where we take leave of the magnificent spectacle of the Vest Fjord. Before quitting it, I cast my eye once more across to the southern side, which we left in the morning. This fjord has been compared, by Everest, to the jaws of an enormous shark. Facing us, across the water, is the mighty landmark, Skotstind; to the left of it, the range of mountains that stretch away to the eastward; the summit of one peak sharp as a tooth, another, like a truncated cone; a third rounded off into less prominent contour. The inventor of the shark's jaws comparison, will, I presume, set these down as the incisors and molars respectively. Farther to the eastward, the shores of the fjord gradually approach each other, and narrow

into the Ofoten Fjord—the shark's gullet, in fact; the Luffoden range on this side the water, forming the upper jaw. So clear is the atmosphere, that we can make out the minutest features of the scene very distinctly, although we must be, at least, thirty miles from the nearest opposite shore. The sun, now near the horizon, is lending fresh beauties to this striking scene, holding his gorgeous court all through the solemn Arctic night. Some of the snow-fields in the foreground are roseate with the horizontal rays, while others are ashy white in the shadow. Sleep and death lying side by side. The sea is smooth and transparent as glass. This one view amply repaid me for my visit to Norway.

An American and his lady, who were on board, were greatly impressed with what they saw. She had been educated at Dresden, and was the most pleasing woman of her nation I have met with.

"My wife is very high-taught, sir," said her husband to me. "It is her education, sir, that has given her such an eye for the picturesque and romantic."

This gentleman was much dissatisfied with the accommodations on board the vessel. But I suggested that, at all events, it would not be likely to "bust up." Upon which he replied solemnly,

"Sir, you've seen better days, if you have ever been off this steamer."

Bidding adieu to this sight, more like a vision than a reality, we dive into that singular strait, the Rafte-sund, which, like Gimse-ström, more to the west, cuts straight through the Luffodens, and separates Hindö on the east, the largest island in Norway, from Waagö, on the west. It is some twenty miles long, almost straight, and overhung with mountains, the steep slopes of which are as verdant as the Cheviots.

See, there goes an old eider duck, with her gray speckled head, and rusty plumage,

stealthily leading her brood, which are not bigger than your fist, under the shelter of the rocks. She is evidently disconcerted at these calm still retreats being invaded by the puffing dampskib; now turning to the right, now to the left, in much perplexity.

Where is her lord and master, with his splendid dress of white and buff, his neck shaded with sea-green? Ungallant creature! having waited the result of incubation, during which time he is everything a fond husband can be, he no sooner sees the young ones hatched, than he is off, according to his wont, to the outer islands, where he is living the life of a bachelor; leaving the brown dame to attend to the household. The young brood are so precocious, that he considers them not to need his protection. Not so, however, while his lady is on the eggs. All his courage and watchfulness are then brought into play. Royston crows, ravens, and, above all, ermine-cats, have a special liking for these delicacies. But they must

attempt to rob the nest, at their peril. A Norwegian tells me an anecdote of a raven which he saw thus engaged; when the eider-drake contrived to seize him by the neck, dragged him down to the water, and ducked him till he was drowned. On the adjacent Ulvö, an osprey was seen to dart down upon a drake; and so firmly were his claws imbedded, and so strong the drake, which kept diving and bothering his enemy, that both drake and osprey were captured.

The osprey often gets into trouble, in pursuit of food. An Englishman on board tells me, he saw one of these birds dart down upon a salmon, in the Alten. Down went the fish, and bird with it, never to rise again.

As a proof of the number of these valuable ducks, the captain informs me that, last voyage, a little south of this, he encountered such a quantity of young broods, that he had to stop the steamer, to let them get out of the way.

As we advance, the channel becomes so narrow, that we see various ferns, for which Norway is so celebrated, growing among the rocks. A little way up the Sound, on our left, lies a marvellous clump of mountains, of grotesque form, just below which is a glacier in a murky recess, descending, apparently, to the shores of a confined bay. This curious piece of water is called Swartsund (black sound); a very fitting name; for it must be always in the shade. At its mouth, lies the establishment of a Handelsman (merchant.)

Perhaps one of the most curious features in Norwegian coast scenery, are these Handelsteder, stuck down in the most out of the world places that it is possible to conceive. They are brought into existence by the fishery. If it were to fail, these shores would again become as deserted as those of Spitzbergen. Whilst threading the narrow and intricate passages amid the islands; so lonely and uninhabitable to look at, that you would be

inclined to think you are the first human being who has ever been there; you suddenly round a jutting rock; and lo, and behold! a neat little house stands before you, painted red or yellow, and roofed with red tiles; and over it, the Norwegian flag gaily floating. This is never omitted, when a vessel of any kind approaches. Then, there is the usual warehouse projecting on piles over the water, and the boat-houses, and the shop, where the peasants come to buy whatever they want; and all the other buildings that cluster in profusion about a well-appointed Norwegian gaard. His vessel is away; perhaps, gone on its second voyage to Bergen, with the dried fish. The oil and roe went the first voyage.

The merchant is generally postmaster, and he comes on board to give and receive letters at the post-office; the interview being usually accompanied by much pulling off of hats, and shaking of hands. Everybody seems to know everybody in this country.

Indeed, I find there are several people on board who claim my acquaintance, having seen me before in Norway. They even address me by name, which I account for by the fact that wherever a Norwegian meets an Englishman, he is sure to ask his name. This he either puts down in his pocket-book, or in the tablets of his memory.

Two years ago, this Raftesund was haunted by a set of pirates, who were quite a terror to the country. Growing more daring by impunity, they at length broke into the merchant's at Svolvær, and carried off goods to the amount of several hundred dollars. After this, they proceeded to the post-office; but the postmaster, who is my informant, was aroused by his big dog, and gave the alarm. However, they managed to get clear off. At length, an expedition was organized to hunt down the marauders; and one dark night they were surprised and captured. The leader was a gipsy: and two

or three women were in the gang. The whole were confined at Svolvær, but contrived to break out, and seizing a boat, escaped. Ultimately they were captured, and the ringleader condemned to eleven years' imprisonment in Trondjem.

Quite as much mystery prevails about the origin of this singular race, (Fante-folk,) in this country as elsewhere. They are said to have appeared first in Sweden in 1513. An interesting account of them has been compiled by Eilert Sundt, published at Christiania in 1852. Like Barrow, he has lived much among them.

At length, we emerge from the narrow passage, and find ourselves on the northern side of the Luffodens, the features of which are very similar to those of the southern side.

After touching at Steilo on Wolf's Island; where there is a church and several comfortable-looking houses, we turn the vessel's head round, and enter the Raftesund again.

In fact, the last station lies quite out of the direct course to the northward, as well as the different places the steamer has stopped at in the course of the day. But as we are not pressed for time, and by this means we have seen what we should otherwise not have done, we are rather pleased than not, at the round-about nature of the voyage.

Next day, we touch at Sandtorv upon Hindö, lying in latitude $68\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$. And yet Mr. Christensen, the merchant here, has sent a parcel of winter barley (bygd) to the Paris Exhibition. Oats and rye now cease to be much grown, as they do not thrive so well. At this place resides a doctor; and there is none other till we arrive at Tromsö, distant one hundred and ten miles. The mountains become less abrupt than those of the Luffodens; and there appears to be a good deal of ground in cultivation between them and the sea.

A few remarks will not be amiss here,

respecting the peculiar climate of this country. Considering its distance from the equator, no land in the world is blessed with such a mild climate. Even at Alten, the seat of the English copper-mining company, and which is a little short of latitude 70°, and where, according to Von Buch, perpetual snow is found at the height of 3,300 feet, and birch 1,500 feet, above the sea, corn is successfully cultivated; while in Siberia, in the same latitude as Christiania, viz., 60°, agriculture altogether ceases. Nay, according to Hill, corn is cultivated in that country with tolerable success, only as far as latitude 55°.

To realize still further the abnormal condition of the climate, let us remember that on the east of Greenland, Polar ice begins at 65°. There seems no reason to doubt, that these climatic phenomena must be attributed mainly to the gulf-stream. Local influences, also, much modify the climate. Thus at Roraas, which is far inland, and lies

below latitude 65°, at an altitude of from somewhat over 2,100 feet, neither barley, nor the pine tree, will grow; and at Lessö, in Gulbrandsdal, at a height of from 1,200 to 2000 feet above the sea, the barley harvest is uncertain; potatoes will not grow, and the pine has disappeared; though, in a general way, it is computed that every two degrees of north latitude, as far as climate is concerned, are equivalent to an increased height above the sea of 500 feet. In Valders, on the other hand, pine grows 2,900 feet above the sea; and in Hallingdal, barley at 2,700 feet.

From the roots of trees which have been discovered in high localities, where no trees grow now, it is believed that formerly the average temperature of Norway was higher than at present. It is also observed, that where woods are cut or burnt down, in very high situations, they do not grow again; but this is, probably, owing to the young shoots not having the necessary cover.

While on the subject of crops, it may be observed, that while England has hitherto only been talking about Agricultural Statistics, these are already supplied to a considerable extent in Norway. At the end of harvest, the Christiania newspapers contain a report from the Amtmann, or judicial chief of each province, of the produce of the year; though these are not so much in detail as they might be. Since 1847, there has been no collective work published on the general statistics of the country.

On board, I perceive there is a victim to that frightful disease, leprosy, (spedalskhed,) which still pervades the coast of Norway from Stavanger to Finmark. The most cases occur in the northern part of the Bergen district, where one in every two hundred and seventy-two is a leper. In the last census in 1845, the whole number throughout the kingdom was one thousand one hundred and twenty-three. Some connect it with fish-diet—*e. g.*, Pontoppidan;—but it

is also attributed to bad diet generally, and insufficient clothing; while the poorer classes think frost is the cause of it. In some cases it is hereditary. At Bergen a hospital has been established for the reception of patients; and a medical man there has written a work on the subject, for which he has received the medal of the French Academy. There is a heavy, stolid expression about the poor fellow on board; his skin is livid and unhealthy, and the face twitched up and knotted; but he has by no means arrived at the worst stage of the malady; when the countenance becomes disgusting to look upon. In all my wanderings in this country, I have failed to discover anything like the cretins, or persons afflicted with the goître, that are so frequent in Switzerland.

At Havnvig, Voged H. comes on board, whom I met on the Tana. This gentleman acted with much energy and determination last year. As some of our readers may

be aware, the Russians have committed an encroachment on the Norwegian border, adjoining Russian Lapland. Two or three spots, clearly Norwegian, have thus been occupied by Russians and Fins, and eventually claimed by Russia as her own. A fresh inroad of these Filibusters occurring near the Tana, Mr. H., after giving due notice to them to quit, on their still maintaining their ground, proceeded to burn their huts, and thus forced them off the Norwegian soil. But we shall have occasion to speak more at length on this matter when we have arrived on the other side of the North Cape.

CHAPTER XVII.

A Boat Voyage from Klöven—The Andswand—A Wedding Guest—An Untimely Marriage—Midnight Visit to a Cabin—Twofold Efficacy of Medicine—Arrival at Fosmoen — Characteristics of the Neighbouring Country—The Bardu and the Malanger—Magnificent Mountain Scenery—Autumn Sunsets—Ascent of the Iis-Tind—Fosmoen—A Marriage Party—The culminating Point—A Gigantic Feast—The Bride and the Bridesmaids—A New Country—The Hostess in Gala Dress — Bridal Gifts — The ascetic Priest—"Ugudelig"—The Nectar of the Scandinavian Valhalla—A Finmark Soyer—His heroic Adventure with a Bear—A group of old Stories.

At Klöven, a few hours south of Tromsö, we take leave of the steamer, and hire a boat for a spot called Ström, on the mainland; it being our intention to make across

the fjeld to our old fishing quarters on the Mons.

The boatmen were hardy, willing fellows, who, after fishing at the Luffodens in the winter, had earned their eighty dollars each by the spring fishing in Finmark. But, with their proverbial carelessness, they had forgotten to take a sail, and a sudden wind springing up on our bow, we were tossed about not a little, and took a long time to accomplish the five miles to Ström. Here we drag the boat up a rapid stream, and then launch it upon an inland lake. Crossing this, we succeed in hiring a horse and sledge for our luggage, at a solitary farmhouse called Finset. From this, a steep ascent through a wild, uninhabited forest, brings us to the border of a lake, the Andswand, some eight miles long. On either side of it are dangerous morasses, detaining the waters that flow from the mountains; upon which, though it is past midsummer, the snow still hangs in large

masses, from the unusual lateness of the season.

On these inhospitable shores, two small farmers have established themselves, picking up a scanty subsistence. From one of these, a boat is dispatched to carry us over the lake. I must not forget to mention that as we toiled through the forest, along a path which was so narrow that we had occasionally to use an axe to clear the road, we were overtaken by a Norwegian farmer, dressed in a Sunday suit of wadmel, and mounted on a chestnut pony. As it was then eleven o'clock at night, I was at a loss to know what he was doing abroad so late. He was, he told me, bound to a wedding, to take place next day, between the son and the daughter of the two farmers respectively, who dwelt on opposite sides of the water. The bridal-party were to start at midnight, on horseback, for the church, which was ten long miles through the forest, without the slightest road.

"There will be a dozen horses, I have no doubt," he said, "and we shall cut a very tolerable figure. The bride's father is a poor man, but he is an honest fellow, and my friend. The richer peasants won't take the trouble to come a long distance to the wedding, because they despise his poverty. But I shall act as I think is right, and do him this little piece of service."

He then commenced a string of inquiries about the war; in the course of which he shewed himself quite at home in the geographical part of it.

Now, though I was sincerely glad to hear of the happiness in store for the young lady, I could not help regretting that she should have chosen that day of all days in the year to be married on. For it was to her father that we looked for a horse, when we got to the other end of the lake; and, under the circumstances, no horse would be forthcoming; as, indeed, we found on arriving there. So there was nothing for it but to leave all

our baggage, including boxes, rifles, fishing-rods, hams, &c., in a secluded nook of the wood near the water, and walk through the morasses to the nearest cabin, the owner of which, we learnt, had also a horse.

The people were all asleep when we entered the one-roomed abode. On one bed, or rather in one corner of the room, lay the peasant and his wife, and a little infant. In another, two small boys and a little servant-girl; while huddled up in the further corner was a loskarl, or day-labourer, who was helping them to collect their miserable crop of hay. The people are new comers; the man who was here last year having left in consequence of his wife dying in child-bed; the fourth case of the kind in the neighbourhood within a short period. This poor woman, too, is ill with cough and fever. Fortunately for her, we are able to give her some medicine. Fortunately, I should add, for us also; for the husband, who at first declined assisting us, as he was very "traeng,"

"throng," *i. e.* busy, as they say in Yorkshire, consented on seeing the medicine. First giving him directions where to find our traps, we walked on to our destination, through a dense forest of pines and birches, the red boles of the former, and "white-skin-wrapper" of the latter gleaming by the light of the nocturnal sun through the dusky overgrowth. Here and there we passed quantities of fallen birch trees; on the stems of which grew the fungus, from which Amadou, or German tinder, is procured.

Presently we heard the roar of the water-fall, near which lies Fosmoen; then the two dogs which, according to custom, were watching the folded cattle—around which were two or three turf-fires to keep off the musquitoes—commenced barking; and finally we arrive at the house, the inmates of which were soon aroused, and we are, at length, in bed. It was near twelve hours since we left the steamer, and right glad we were to repose.

But I must give some account of the

neighbourhood. The whole country around, which is in latitude 69°, is covered with interminable forests of pine, fir, and birch. Far to the eastward, on the frontiers of Sweden, two rivers take their rise, the Bardu and the Malanger; which, after alternately rioting and gently meandering through the forest, bearing on their bosom timbers felled upon the banks, ultimately join each other about a mile from the house in which we are. The noble stream, henceforward called the Monselv, enters the sea some thirty miles distant, in the fjord going by that name.

But before linking their fortunes once for all, and flowing smoothly in their tranquil course, they have to make a descent of perhaps two hundred feet from the high defile in which they have been pent up.

The Bardu does this first by a perpendicular bound into a seething cauldron of foam, then storming away, by a cataract, into a pool. The Malanger, in its descent, more resembles the falls of Schaffhausen, which,

at certain periods, it quite equals in volume. Below this cataract, is a vast round pool, in diameter as wide as the Thames at Hammersmith. It is here that we expect to find our prey, and we are certain not to be deceived. For no sooner does a salmon leave the salt water, than within a few hours he is poising himself under the huge stones, where the water is gliding smoothly along, preparatory to making a hasty exit by the rapids at the mouths of the pools.

The falls, which may, as the crow flies, be a mile apart, are either visible from the other; the smoke of their angry waters hovering over the dreary pine trees, as the smoke of a furnace, while their dull sounding roarings may still be heard as one wanders through the forest.

But in the angle made by the twin streams before they join, a magnificent sight presents itself. Four mountains, two pyramidal, and two more rounded, rise from among the undulating plains of

forest, and tower to the height of several thousand feet. The tallest, Iis-tind, which, though apparently close at hand, is at least seven miles off, bears on its side a large glacier, the lower part of which is hidden from view, where it descends into a deep lake of mingled ice and water.

No pen can describe the scenic effects of the autumn evenings here. When the sun has all but set, I have seen a robe of copper-coloured mist girding the base of the mountain, and hiding the lake below; while, by a strange inversion of nature, the higher peaks were visible, all gaunt and grim, with the ghastly blue glacier clinging to their sides. Presently, the ruddy robe lost its hues, and became a veil of white mist, which gradually rose higher and higher, and hid the aiguilles and everything from view. At times, all sorts of shapes appear in the many-tinted clouds. I have seen the resemblance of a regal crown, placed on a cushion. The cross of Con-

stantine becomes almost intelligible on such occasions.

One of our party started to ascend the mountain. The only access to the top was by one of two ridges, as sharp as knives, in the rugged embrace of which reclined the aforesaid glacier. An old pointer, which accompanied him, had remained at Christiania during the preceding winter, and was, as might be expected, far too obese for work. His fat, in short, proved fatal. Slipping in descending, he was not nimble enough to recover himself, and rolled over the cliff. When his master next saw him, he was several hundred feet below; a slight kick, and he was as dead as a stone. Alas! poor Rollo, a banquet for the eagles and wolves. He was worthy of a better fate. Still I owed him a grudge, for when I was encamped at the Malanger Foss (or Fall,) a year ago, he managed to steal into my tent, and bolt with a ham, which never was recovered, and which I had vainly imagined was out of harm's way.

Fosmoen, the house in which we are, lies not more than three hundred yards from the Bardu Fall. Last year, when we arrived here, the people were in a state of much excitement, a rare thing with these quiet Norwegians, except on the occasion of a wedding, and this was one. It was just as if a stone had been thrown into a standing pool.

The younger son, Ole, had found for himself a help-mate, and the bridal party went down the river in great state to the parish church, which is only twelve miles off. Their conveyance was a ten-oared boat; which accommodated forty people. From the solitary farm houses, that here and there dot the banks in the midst of the forest, rifle-shots were fired as the procession passed to and fro.

On their return to Fosmoen, the chief actors in the scene drank from a vast bowl of milk, which was brought to them outside the threshold. Coffee was then served. After supper, the guests were stowed away in

various sleeping places. This was not so easy, as they were not less than one hundred in number. For ourselves, we took up our abode at a distant farm-house. Next day at six P.M., we went to greet the bride, and were amused at the scene that presented itself. The guests, it should be observed, had been eating and drinking all day with little intermission. But this, as we were told, was the "culminations punct," or culminating point of the festivities, when the coping stone, so to say, was placed on the entertainment, and the mistress of the house surpassed herself in catering for the guests.

In the largest "stue" (room) of the house, the floor of which was strewed with fresh juniper sprigs, were ranged parallel to each other, three long tables; two of which were beset by peasant women of all ages, dressed in the very best homespun of various colours; while the third was entirely occupied by male visitors. On all public occasions, the sexes are kept well apart in this country—

this according best with their simple notions of propriety. Outside the doors was a crowd of persons, ready to relieve guard at the first vacancy. We were immediately marched to the seat of honour, at the top of one of the tables, and placed next the priest

Once seated, I had an opportunity of looking around me. Conversation, if it had been going on, was no longer brisk; the feast of reason and the flow of soul knew no place here. As far as merriment was concerned, it might rather have been a funeral feast than a bridal. The only sounds that struck my ear, were the clattering of plates and rattling of jaws. And such viands! At the top of each table, was a capacious wooden vessel of bridal porridge, *i. e.*, rye and barley stir-about floating in hot butter. Next to this, came a bowl of milk; next a similar vessel full of salted salmon of last year's catching; below these were a pile of fladbrod, nearly a yard in diameter; and then a castle of butter placed on a wooden stand; an edifice of about two

feet in height. Such was the fare repeated in exactly the same order up and down the tables; there being about four editions of these dainties at each board. Although the very sight of the delicacies almost turned my stomach, I must fain dip a wooden spoon into the bridal porridge, and swallow a lump of it, and then into the milk, and do likewise; after the most approved Norwegian fashion.

Our arrival gradually introduced a little life into the scene. Or, perhaps, it was that the important business of eating had been settled satisfactorily. At first, whispers began to be exchanged among the women; while some of the young girls, whose chief attractions were clear healthy skins, and white teeth, stole sidelong peeps towards the place where we sat enthroned side by side with his Reverence. On a stool, in the middle of the room, sat the bride; a pleasing damsel, with light blue eyes, and flaxen hair; the bridegroom, a stalwart fellow standing beside her. She wore no crown, or bridle-belt, or tippet decked with silver and gold ornaments,

such as are customary in the south and west of Norway.*

This is, in fact, a new country; which was only colonized at the beginning of the century; and where few of the customs of the older parts of the country are to be found.

After the bride, the most conspicuous person in the room was the mistress of the house, who oscillated between the bridal stool and us with great alacrity. Six feet high, and stout in proportion, she was dressed in a flaring red and black check of home-manufacture. On her head was the black satin cap so common in Norway. "Would we have this, would we have that? some more porridge? or perhaps a little salmon? she hoped we admired her butter." Of course, we assured her that everything was excellent, especially the "bridal porridge."

Had that been bad; her reputation as a skilful house-wife would have been gone for

* Some of these articles are of much value. I purchased a tippet in Sundal decorated with fifty-two curious ornaments of silver gilt.

ever. A wedding in Norway is the greatest event that can occur in a family. It is then that the mistress feels that the eyes of the country are upon her, and that accordingly as she acquits herself as queen of the feast will her name go down to posterity.

All this time, the good humour of the company was increasing, and it eventually came to a climax, when I rose and presented the bride with a small present, which I had brought for the occasion. In the western valleys of Norway, a number of gifts are showered upon the happy couple; some in money, some in useful articles. And it is the duty of some intimate friend of the family, to preside, and announce the various presents with the names of the donors. As no liquors were visible, I enquired of the priest, a black-haired, rather handsome individual, with a shining countenance, knowing dark eye, and full lips, enveloped in a claret coloured coat, whether there was no "finkel" (corn brandy,) moving about.

"Oh, no!" he replied, pursing up his

mouth, and assuming a grave look, "We don't do those things. We think it 'ugudelig,' *i. e.* ungodly. It might lead to excesses."

"But there will be some dancing presently, won't there?"

"Oh, no!" he replied, elevating his eyebrows, "we think that 'ugudelig.' This is a very solemn occasion."*

Hereupon, I made a sign to my companion, who at once disappeared, in search of goodly box which we had brought from the immortal Lundgreen's of Trondjem. Lundgreen is the Fortnum and Mason of the Arctic regions. Speedily he returned with a bottle of excellent Madeira. The priest did not require much pressing to take a glass;

* I have reason to believe the art of dancing is unknown in this valley. Elsewhere the 'Halling' is considered an indispensible accomplishment. In this

> "First they dance in solemn measure,
> Very slow in step and gesture;"

and then, suddenly, begin to fling their heels up to the ceiling.

and a second, and so on. We then offered him a cigar, which he accepted, nothing loth. I wondered within myself whether what he was doing was not "ugudelig."

The bride and bridegroom, of course, took some wine with us. In return they produced a bottle; and we were offered a liqueur glass of mead; a mixture apparently of treacle and water, with a little hop in it; which I, of course, drank off with an approving smack; although it was particularly nasty. Mead, the nectar of the Scandinavian Valhalla, is not to be compared to beer; but if properly made, it is not unpalatable. The best I ever tasted in Scandinavia was from an antique horn, when, together with a Swedish student, I drank to the memory of Odin, in the bowels of the hill, near old Upsala, that is supposed to be his grave.

Altogether, the eating and drinking was execrable. And yet these people have forty cows and fifty sheep, and own a domain some ten miles long by three broad. And will it be believed that a cook, Kiögemester, had been

hired expressly to assist the lady of the house in preparing the banquet. He was a Quain; one of that tribe, originally from Finland, which inhabits the north eastern part of Sweden. Their language so much resembles the Hungarian, that a gentleman from that nation, whom I met in this country, told me he found little difficulty in understanding them.*

The Soyer of the occasion was a sly looking fellow, with curly black hair, and gipsy visage, who had come forty miles through the forest. He had a terrible fright on the road. First he saw one bear; but being rather a knight of the spit, than a knight-errant, in the valiant sense, he took to his heels, and saw no more of it. But misfortunes never come single. He had not gone much further, when he came pop upon an old she-bear with a very small cub. The cub, who had

* At the last census there were 2687 Quains in Norway. It is believed that they first appeared in this country at the beginning of the last century. They are said to have been driven out of their own country by the wars of Charles XII.

probably never seen a man before, seemed rather inclined to cultivate his acquaintance, in spite of the maternal warnings to the contrary. Upon which, she literally boxed its ears with her paw, and placed it in a tree. What happened next, our hero did not wait to see; at all events, he arrived safe and sound at his destination, and seemed in the exercise of his art to have forgotten his fears.

I wonder whether the good people ever heard the story of how Thor treated the stingy givers of a marriage feast in Upper Telemarken. The scene of this transaction was Urebro, at the upper end of Lake Totak, where a quantity of broken rocks are still to be seen, looking like old gables and towers. On this spot, there formerly stood two farm-houses, at each of which a wedding-feast was held on the self-same day. Somehow or other, Thor fancied he would visit his old friend of Thelemark on this occasion. At the first house he found the guests drinking and making merry; and the bridegroom politely offered him the ale cask itself to drink out

of. Highly pleased with the draught, and his reception generally, Thor next proceeded to the adjoining dwelling.

The people here were foolish enough to offer him an ordinary tankard. Deeply incensed at this, and, perhaps, a little heated in his previous potations, Thor hurled the tankard on the ground, and walked off, swinging his hammer. When he arrived at the cliff above, a few strokes of his hammer brought the whole down over the house, where he had been so scurvily treated. In his exertions, he lost his hammer, and it was not till he had turned over the ruins, casting stones right and left, that he found it again. While so engaged, he made a regular path, by which the cattle now climb up to the mountain; and which still goes by the name of "Thor's Way."

There is another odd tale of a Bonder in the district of Bahus, who was celebrating his daughter's marriage-feast.

The board was already covered with viands; but before the guests sat down, the

whole of the good things disappeared. The host could not make this out, but forthwith ordered up a fresh relay of eatables. The guests now set to work with a good will. Still, much more was consumed than they could have possibly eaten. Near the door f the room stood an old knight, who was more wide-awake than the rest. Perceiving a sound at the table, as if so many little pigs were eating, he at once took horse, and rode off to a neighbouring cliff; at which he tapped. The cliff opened; and the knight called to somebody inside, "Lend me your cap; you shall have mine instead." "Take it," said a voice, "but promise me to bring it back before the setting of the sun." Off set the knight back to the house; and by the aid of the cap, which made him invisible, perceived that between each guest sat two Trolls, who took the good things up in their hands, and munched them to their heart's content. Upon this, he rapped them so smartly on the knuckles with his whip,

that they bounced out of the room in a twinkling. When they were gone, he took off his cap, and called to the people, who now saw him for the first time. "Hitherto," said he, "you have had the Evil One eating with you; but now let us have some fresh food, and I will keep you company." This was done, and they feasted heartily; and had, at last, enough and to spare. On the approach of evening, the knight mounted his horse, and rode to the hill. Here he threw down the cap which he had borrowed, and then set off as hard as ever he could go. Well it was that he did so, for he had scarcely turned his horse's head, when a number of Trolls came running after him. Some of them did catch hold of the horse's tail as he was crossing a bridge; but the nag was strong and clever, and escaped out of the mess much better than did Tam o' Shanter's mare.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Grand Fishing Quarters—A fierce Salmon Pool—Dangers and Difficulties—"Staking"—An unexpected Plunge—An unkempt Carl—The first Salmon—Mistaken Zeal—An Exciting Moment—A Prize.

WHEN I first knew this valley, we pitched our tents for a time in the forest on the edge of the Malanger Fall. And never, perhaps, were fishermen located in a grander spot. In front of us rose the Iis-tind, with its glacier; and at our feet, circled in by sombre pine-woods, lay the vast pool which the ever-flowing waters had in the course of ages scooped out for themselves. What a luxury it was, when we rose from our birch-leaf beds of a

morning, to plunge into the cool depths of an inlet, on one side of this amphitheatre; and then, in the evening, after our supper of broiled salmon, as we smoked our pipes over the embers, how we used to linger before turning in, to feast our eyes once more on the sight, or chat over the triumphs and reverses of the day. If the weather was bright, we reposed by day and fished by night.

Fishing in this place was no holiday entertainment, notwithstanding. Without good nerves, and a steady hand and foot, you would have been decidedly out of your element. When the river was full, the cataract, instead of easing off and subsiding into quiescence below the fall, would rush fiercely onward, right through the centre of the deep basin, excited into fury by a mighty boulder that stood in the way; and then, before reaching the neck of the pool, off filed the stream to the right and left, and sped backward in two mill-races to the place from whence it came, *i. e.*, to the bottom of the fall.

The chief cast for the salmon was just below the spot where this turn about and wheel about of the waters took place, and where the current flowed swift and strong, but without a ripple for a few yards, previous to joining the rapids. None but a strong and practised boatman could hold his own here, and put the boat in the right place. If he did not keep a sharp look out, he might be caught in the back stream, which led away into the bottomless pit of foam just under the foss. Or, if he let the boat get too far down, it would be upon the smooth water frightening the salmon, and carried right over the rapids, when much valuable time would be lost in setting it up again into the pool.

On our first visit, we were ignorant of all this, and not knowing whether, in so thinly peopled a country, any boatmen were to be procured, we brought two seamen from Tromsö, a Quain and a Norwegian; whom we found perfectly useless. In the first place,

they neither of them could "stake," which is a *sine quâ non* in most of these rivers, where, in some parts, nothing at all can be done with oars. "Staking" is thus performed. The boatman stands close to the stern of the boat, which is narrow, long, and pointed at both ends, armed with a pole of ten or twelve feet long. Never moving from his place, he contrives with this to propel the boat up impossible streams; where any amount of strength, expended in rowing would avail nothing.

It is curious to watch the boat, when it approaches a fall of, perhaps, a couple of feet, hesitating, like a horse refusing his fence, to surmount the obstacle. But it is no use to swerve: see how cleverly the man keeps its head straight at it—go it must, and does.

Michel, my Tromsö man, was terribly alarmed, when he found himself rowing scross the pool.

"That dreadful backstream! We shall be carried under the foss. The Lord help me!

what will become of my poor wife and family !"

In the midst of which *O misereres !* he got the boat into the smooth water, where my fly ought to have been, and down the rapids we went in a moment. Very wroth, I immediately seized the pole to give him a lesson in staking, for which I was but ill adapted. The very second push I gave, over I went, head foremost, into the water. Uttering a hideous groan of anguish, Michel had, nevertheless, the presence of mind to seize me, Thetis-like, by the heel; and eventually dragged me, by little and little, as helpless as a log, from my situation, into the boat. Encumbered with my dress, I might have had awkward work to reach the land, as the torrent was strewed with sunken rocks; but Michel was much the most frightened of the two.

It now became clear to me that Michel was a mistake. Lugging out cod in the rolling seas of the Vest Fjord, there he was at home; but here he was all abroad. In this

strait, by dint of much begging, for labour is very scarce up here in the summer, I procured the service of an unkempt carl, Peer, by name, at the rate of half a dollar a day. Peer cared not a jot for the terrors of the foss. And, though now and then, in crossing over the pool, we were sucked into alarming proximity to the falls, he always managed to get the boat into an eddy which whirled us out of the back stream just in time. But gaffing salmon was not his forte.

There was a snug and tolerably deep bay, just above the rapids. The very place for landing the fish. Into this I steered my first salmon. At first, he shewed symptoms of rushing down stream; but, by degrees, he was coaxed into the haven.

"Now, Peer," I said, "remember your instructions, put the hook over him, and draw it quickly towards you."

"Ja, cors," replied Peer, *i. e.* yes, by the rood. "Meget stor lax—a very big salmon. Femti mark i det mindste—at least

fifty marks," *i. e.* about twenty-six pounds English.

"Now, Peer," cried I, as the fish gave a turn and a roll over, shewing a length and a breadth, which quite justified Peer's calculation. Dashing at the exhausted salmon like a maniac, Peer struck at it half-a-dozen times in succession, as if he was going to punch it full of holes. When the commotion subsided, the fish was gone off. He had knocked the fly out of its mouth.

"Gammel Eric,—old Eric," *i. e.* deuce take it! "Jeg har aldrig seet slig—I never see'd the like," was the fellow's exclamation.

I felt a strong inclination to throw him into the water; but contented myself with muttering inwardly "Torsk!".

Next time, Peer succeeded better. But it was only an eight pounder. After this, although I hooked several fish, they were all off before I could get them within reach of Peer. Next day, at the very first cast, a

magnificent fellow rushed at the fly, coming clean out of water in his eagerness to be possessed of it. The moment he felt the prick of the hook, he was up stream and alongside the boat with the speed of a bullet. Of course the line became slack.

"Oh! my unlucky stars, I've lost him," I ejaculated, winding up the line disconsolately. "But no! He must be on—pull gently ahead, Peer."

I was right—well hooked, not a doubt of it. Finding himself in restraint, the fish tried all sorts of expedients to get free. Up he flew in the air, and down I sunk the point of my rod, or he must have snapped the gear. Then down he dived into the deepest part of the pool, and had I not held him firmly, he would have sawed the line off against the sharp rocks. Nothing would induce him to come into my little bay before-mentioned. At last, he started away for the top of the rapids, and after sticking there, immoveable as a stone, for some minutes, suddenly darted down

stream, Peer rowing after him furiously. All at once the fish anchored under a large stone, in the centre of the torrent.

"Now to land," I cried, winding up line with all my might, as we passed below the stone. A small back-stream was close at hand, and jumping ashore, I pulled him into this, before he knew where he was. He at once became bothered, and I saw it was all over with him. A glorious prize he was, thirty-two pounds English.

"En braa Fangst!—a famous catch! Krogfisk!—hook-fish!" cried Peer.

He was in fact a male fish, as was evident from the hook at the end of his lower lip. I never in all my fishing experience saw so short and broad a fish for the weight.

On another occasion, I had hold of a fish nearly as large; but he broke the treble gut in a second.

The sides of the pool were fringed with mighty heaps of drift-wood. Nobody ever used this drift-wood, though there was enough

to have supplied all Oxford with faggots for several winters. The bark was peeled off, and the wood was blanched and smoothed by the friction of the waters, as if by the action of sand-paper. Glorious bonfires we used to make of it in front of our tent. The fire-place was composed of large square stones, and built with nice skill.

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